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HERMAN,  
OR  
YOUNG KNIGHTHOOD.

BY E. FOXTON.

VOL. I.

BOSTON:  
LEE AND SHEPARD.  
1866.

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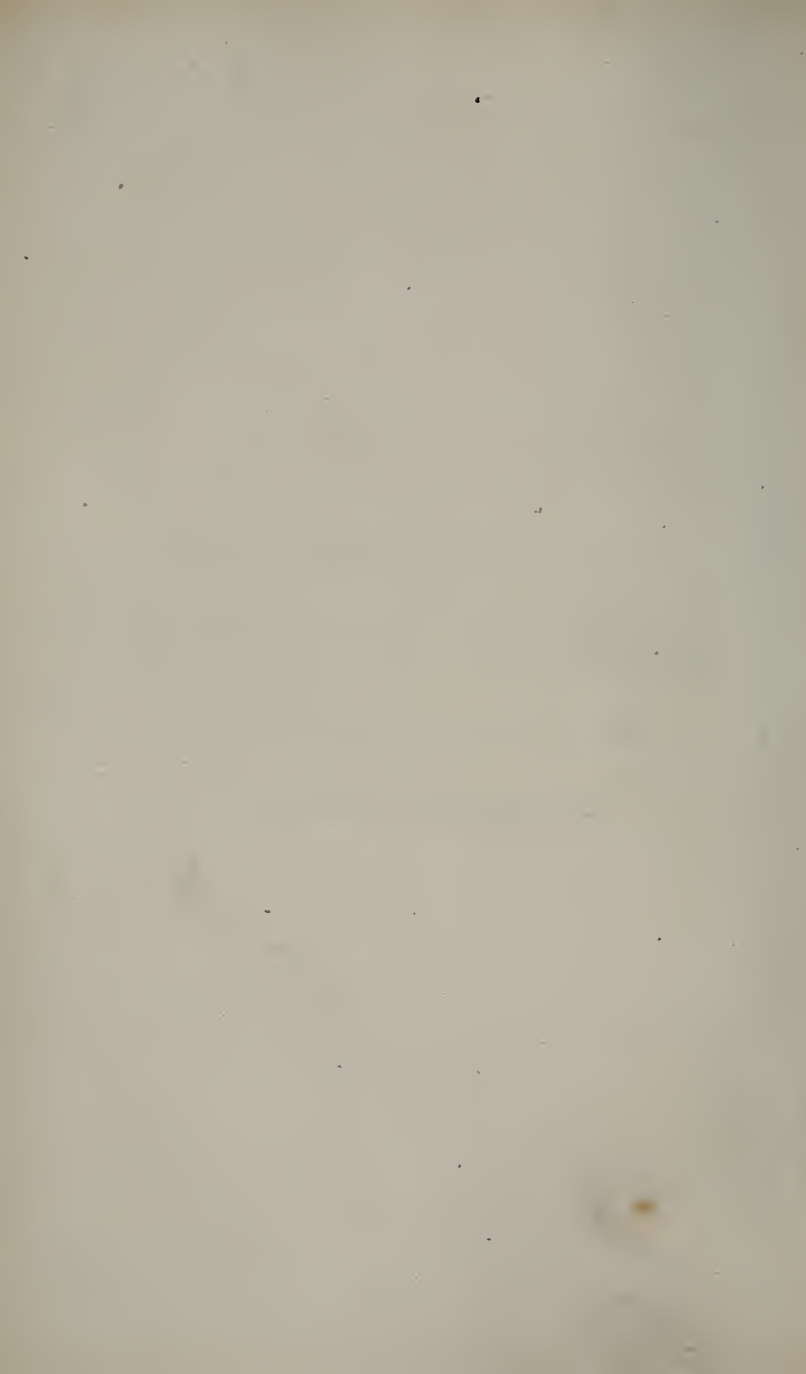
LEE AND SHEPARD,

In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the District of Massachusetts.

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12 Oct 50 C. J. G. J. G.

TO THE MOTHERS  
OF  
PUTNAM, SHAW, AND THE LOWELLS,  
THESE VOLUMES ARE DEDICATED,  
IN REVERENT SYMPATHY.



## PREFACE.

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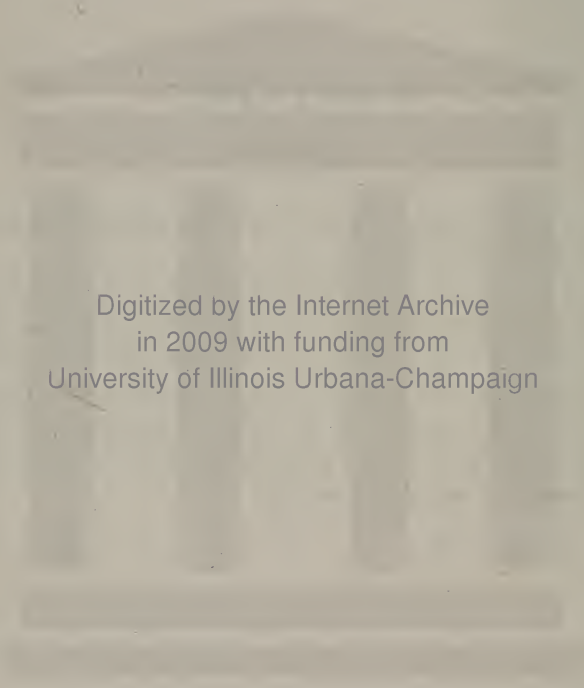
THIS story was written in the years eighteen hundred and fifty-seven and fifty-eight.

It is now presented with little alteration to the reader, less as a picture of the state of things to-day existing among us, than of a state of things from which the war of to-day is delivering us,—of a state of things into which we may be thrust back to-morrow, if we listen to those who would fain prattle to us of the “constitutional rights” to tyranny of armed, or vanquished, traitors.

Boston, 1865.

E. F.

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Lewis & Co. Boston  
Vols. I & II



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# HERMAN:

OR,

## YOUNG KNIGHTHOOD.

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### CHAPTER I. YOUNG AMERICA.

*"Odi profanum vulgus et arceo."*

HORACE.

"Of all things under heaven that make me merry,  
It makes me merriest to see a boy  
That wants to be a man."

PHILIP VAN ARTEVELDE.

Mrs. MYDASS gave a ball. Many of her newer acquaintance who were bidden went to it; and some of her older acquaintance, who were not, improved the opportunity which their enforced seclusion afforded, to meditate and comment upon the wholesome text, "Pride goeth before a fall," evincing thereby in themselves an edifying amount of humility and charity.

Mrs. Mydass, in the mean while, stood under a splendid chandelier, in a very pretty little blue-and-silver boudoir,—a handsome, haughty she-*millionaire*, and she looked it, in a smuggled crimson velvet, trimmed with point lace, fresh from Madame l'Hoste's at Paris, and in an attitude which would have been as fine as her dress, if her nose had not been unfortunately

*posed* just an eighth of an inch above its proper altitude, which gave the expression of an unsuccessful effort to smell of the roses in what Mr. Dickens says "a lady calls her back hair,"—an effort to be condemned, not merely as unsuccessful, but as altogether fatuitous; for the roses were not like those which her first-love used to put into it in the little back garden, but of muslin, and probably smelt accordingly.

A cordial pleasure tempered the terrors of her majesty as she welcomed her friends, *i. e.*, those whom she wished to have for her friends, leaders of the *ton*, reigning *belles* and *beaux*, prominent politicians of the dominant party, a distinguished author or artist or two, and last not least, (for she had been by nature a warm-hearted creature, though now a good deal spoiled and spoiling,) two or three of her early play-fellows, who were "respectable" enough to keep still within her sphere, whom she did love, and who did love her. Most of these favored ones rewarded her by calling her "charming" and "fascinating," (which she certainly was when she chose to be,) or, if their tongues were tainted with snobbishness, "high-bred," (which she certainly was not, unless it be high-bred to be bred up by one's grandmamma in the little parlor-kitchen behind what used to be her milliner's shop in Newburyport, before she and her only son, between them, made the money which made Mrs. Mydass.) Towards all the rest of her visiters, however, summoned to visit her, as they had been, by notes partly at least in her own handwriting,—notes which, if she had had anything of that spirit of generosity and honor for which only, if at all, is aristocracy to be held in high esteem, should have served as their guaranty against the slightest annoyance from which she could protect them while under her roof,—towards all these, I am sorry to say

that she conducted herself as if she had convened them to envy rather than to share her prosperity, and as if she could find no better way to promote the cheerfulness of the occasion than administering a moral cold shower-bath to them on her very threshold. Equally sorry I am to say, that they revenged themselves after it by getting together in corners, and repeating, with gloomy joy, a certain dark tradition, said to be confirmed still by the memories of many juniors of "the oldest inhabitant," to the effect that her maternal grandfather had often been seen riding through the streets of the city in his cart, laden with the *disjecta membra* of the leafy lords of the forest, felled by his red right hand. This was true; and a very sturdy, jolly old fellow he was; and if his granddaughter's respected husband, with all his "respectability," was half as honest,—I certainly don't mean to deny that he was, because I know nothing to the contrary, except a story that he failed while he was in business in New Orleans, and has never paid his creditors,—why, then, I have only to say that he was one of the noblest works of God, whether he looked like it or not; one cannot always judge by appearances. Moreover, if the conjugal Mydass had been half as good-humored as the grand-paternal Frost, he would have been also one of most good-humored works of God; but alas! he was not, and Mrs. Mydass herself could have borne witness to the fact, if it had not been contrary to all laws of courts or of courtesy, that a wife should be required to testify against her husband.

Calling imagination to the aid of history, after a custom established, if not authorized, by the example of most chroniclers of men and things, past and present, some of these outraged, not to say outrageous, *ixέραι ἐφ' ἑστίαι* even went so far as to assert that one



pounced upon by their respective, and it is to be hoped, respectful, admirers, and whirled and twirled themselves up into the seventh heaven like Eastern dervishes. They enjoyed themselves very much. The plain or shy fled from the feet of the polka like chaff from the hands of the winnower, and were speedily, we would not be uncourtly enough to say kicked, but *danced* into corners where, as the air gradually heated, they bloomed like blossoms bedewed with hot tears from the candles above them, or were driven by sudden sorties and sallies of the dancers upon the orchestra; and, while it blew Labitzky into their ears or fiddled him into their tresses and *berthes*, fanned themselves industriously, and smiled hard. They enjoyed themselves as much as they could.

The handful of elderly gentlemen got chairs for the handful of elderly ladies when it was possible, but were duly admonished by the younger *beaux* that they must not presume to meddle with those destined for the support of the younger *belles* in the panting pauses of the waltz. They gazed benignly around, remarked how delightful it was "to see the young people so happy," and, if their benevolence was tempered with prudence, took good care to keep their venerable toes out of the way of the happy young people. If it was not, and they did not, they had them soundly trampled on; their benignity proved as fleeting as their youth, and their age was wrapped in deeper gloom.

As the night wore on, the matrons politely clapped their fans upon their gaping mouths, like covers on boxes. They patiently took mental notes of the dresses present, that they might be able to tell their absent friends "about the party," or treasure up a few useful hints for their own future costumes. The old married



men now and then attempted a little wit; but the younger ladies would and the elder could hardly smile upon them. So, after sundry furtive peeps at their watches, "the feeling" among them persuaded some of the hapless old wives and widows to go to the card-tables with them, to make the time seem shorter, and then took them to their coaches unless they had dancing daughters present, when they left them to their fate, and to the dawn of the coming day. "The unfeeling" forsook them speedily, and forgot their own woes together in talking politics;—invaluable topic!—omnipresent like the weather, and so much more exciting.

At midnight, in the armistice which precedes the *German* in the dancing-rooms, while the mass of the company were contending in the supper-room below, or endeavoring still to force an entrance, the pure moonlight sweetness of Schubert's Serenade was playing through the half-emptied apartments; and several music-loving couples, as if wafted by it, like flowers waved by a soft south wind, were gently passing to and fro there, to enjoy it. Two young men of the world, however, (or, as truth compels me to own, boys of the world, for the oldest of the pair could not have been out of his teens,) were disturbing the listeners very much by their chattering, as, with their eyes full of eye-glasses, they lounged near one of the folding-doors, languidly reviewing the slow procession, which passed and repassed before them.

"Who comes here?" said Mr. Robert Jones, as a rather pinch-featured but well-dressed lady approached them, with an expression of shrivelled ecstasy run to seed.

"A granny, dear!" rejoined Mr. John Robinson. "What did you look at her for? Some horrid old maid!"

"No, it wasn't. 'Twas Mrs. Jonathan Howard. I ogled her as hard as I could, on purpose to make her think I'm a nice young man, who can appreciate moral and intellectual excellence even after beauty may be,—just a little,—on the wane. Too much mind; but her husband has a lovely place down on Clam Beach,—lots of company all the time in summer,—and I want to make her invite me next July or August."

"Has a husband and place at the sea-shore, has she? That's some apology for her! I don't see what business women of her age have to go out, though,—only meandering about, and getting in the way of the people the party was made for, and trying to simper you into finding their carriages for them, just as your partner gets desperate and goes off with somebody else. They ought to be 'stayers at home,' as the good book says."

"Here's an old maid for you now, if you want one."

"I don't, thank you; but I know her, and she knows me too, I'm afraid; for she would stand winking and blinking, with her eye-glass up, at Mrs. Eben Clifford's, the other night when I was manager, right in the way of everybody in the *all-round*, till at last, in the conscientious discharge of the duties of my office, I really had to dance right into her.—You wa'n't there. Too exclusive, were you? Lots of fun you lost by it, let me tell you. Half a dozen of us nobbs went together, and had it all our own way. The house of Clifford were so glad to get us on any terms, that old Ebby couldn't say a word. He only walked round the whole evening rubbing his hands, and asking us to take wine, and thanking us for coming.—Well, I had that horrid Miss Andrews, you know,—two yards in the girth, and

weighs twenty stone! 'Twas no fault of mine. I never asked her; but she would keep taking me out, and tiring me to death; and so I thought I'd break her of it, you know, and kill two birds with twenty stone. So first I spun her round till she didn't know where she was;—by Jove, my arm's been as stiff as buckram ever since!—'twas like giving a screw to Bunker Hill Monument!—Then I put on the steam, and made her show her paces, got her going at a *two-forty* in a *retraite*, and bounced her right into Miss Simmins, and Miss Simmins into a cocked hat!

'Oh, what a fall was there, my countrymen!  
There you and I and all of us fell down,  
And the next couple stumbled over us!'

"What! Went down, did they?"

"Miss Andrews on top of Miss Simmins, and I on top of all! I meant to brace myself back when it came to the point, as I have done hundreds of times in such emergencies, and bring up all standing; but the floor was waxed, and my boot slipped, and, as I told you, my arm was good for nothing; and then conceive of the momentum of that mass in motion! Simmy's breath was *squashed* out of her, under the pile of us, in one little *squawk*, just like what a toy-dog makes when you tread on it; but, after we pried Miss Andrews off her, she didn't seem so much the worse.

'Tender maids are tough.'

Perhaps 'twas quite as well for me, that neither of them did recover her speech till I'd had presence of mind enough to be faint, which I did, luckily, before either of them thought of it. Sam Holmes and Seth Somerville had had their eyes on me all the time, and understood, and were perfectly enchanted with, my



conduct from first to last ; so they rushed to the rescue, and tumbled me out into the dressing-room, and pearl-powdered my face to an affecting pallor ; and Minny Blaise and Fanny Flirt came out and fanned and cologned me. That little Fanny Flirt's a real duck,—only sixteen !—'twas a nursery-party, you know,—and so much manner and *savoir faire* ! Self-possession's perfect !”

“ Apologized yet ?”

“ Not I. I've no business to speak to Miss Andrews, because I don't know her ; and as to the venerable Simmins, if I approached her with any such purpose, the natural candor of my disposition would break through all the figments of conventionalism in some such speech as, ‘ Aged maiden, it is you who owe an apology to me, and not to me only, but to the society of which you are no ornament ! You have received but the deserts and the portion of intrusive old maidenhood ; and, if you do not like them, consider what business you have to be an old maid, or to have any portion at all beneath the sun. You are thirty, madam,—thirty years old, if you are a day. You know it ; and no doubt the parish register shows it. Long ago you should have ensconced yourself in the wedding-veil, or in the shroud ; and if our laws were not conceived in a spirit of most weak and self-defeating mercy as short-sighted as yourself, they would set apart a convenient little space in the Back Bay, near Braman's Baths, to be used as a Bosphorus in which to drop you over, and with you all other offenders like you, who presume to keep their patronymics after their twenty-fifth birth days, at the very latest. The Humane Society ought to furnish sacks ; and, if it won't, you can set some of your sewing-circles

to make them, instead of aprons for the Broad-street babies ! ”

“ You’d make the girls more attentive to us than they are now.”

“ No matter. It’s a good fault.”

“ Well, I’ve no objection to the plan, provided you’ll save me out Clara Arden, as our little Nell always makes the cook keep the prettiest kitten for her, when she puts the rest of the litter in soak, as the washerwomen say. If my dog didn’t shake half a dozen or so of her cats from time to time, we should be eaten up by them ; but when he does, I’m sorry to relate, she shakes the house simultaneously with her voice, and will not be comforted, like Rachel weeping for her children.”

“ What do you want Clara Arden kept any longer for ? By the way, here she is ! ‘ Talk of the devil ’— ! ”

A lady and gentleman of singularly fine and distinguished presence were drawing near, towering above the couples before and behind them, in fair, calm, and generous beauty as well as in stature.

“ Who’s that with her ? ”

“ Why, her brother, the Doctor. Don’t you see, you blind bat ? ”

“ Why does he walk with her, then ? What a spoon ! ”

Edward Arden walked with his sister for three reasons : first, he liked to please her ; secondly, he was fastidious, and thought her decidedly, and, with one exception, incomparably, the handsomest and most graceful woman present, and accordingly the most suitable companion for himself ; and, lastly, considering himself on the whole the best male speculation in

the matrimonial market, he always labored under the unfounded apprehension, that somebody would take it into her head to marry him, and that he should not be able to help it without taking more trouble than he usually found it agreeable to take about anything; and he was therefore glad to place himself under his sister's protection.

"I don't believe she's a day over twenty-three," resumed one of the interlocutors.

"What'll you bet?"

"Not much. The last boat-race shelled me out like a pea-pod; and the governor got wind of it, and was perfectly savage. I've been as poor as a beggar ever since, and shall be till next quarter-day; after, too, unless he comes round."

"I don't see that she's anything to make a fuss about, though. She's a good-looker, to be sure; but she hasn't half the style of Miss Moad."

"I thought she was an angel, once.—I tell you I did. What are you smirking at?—I tell you, she was as good as an angel to me, once, when I was a little chap, and had the measles. We were at Saratoga, at the United States Hotel. There was a great *hop*; and just as my sister-in-law was going to lead off in the Redowa, Dr. Arden, who knew she couldn't be everywhere at once, ran up to see after me, and found me half mad with dreams, fright, and fever, all alone, up in the third story, where they'd put me to keep my infection to myself. Nobody could hear when I called; and my hussy of a nurse had gone off, flirting with somebody. Well, my sister was sorry, of course, and did what she could; but she was engaged twenty deep; so she asked the doctor if he wouldn't just send a waiter to find the nurse. But the man couldn't find

her, or didn't try, or something; and meanwhile I got to sleep again, and dreamed the devil had caught me, and was cramming my mouth with cinders and ashes. I howled right out, and woke sputtering, with my tongue feeling exactly as if I'd had a particularly good time at dinner the day before, which wasn't the case."

"As if you had a whole duck in your mouth, with all the feathers on, bitter as burdocks?"

"Precisely! But before I knew where I was, Clara Arden had hold of me, and was lifting my head up, and patting my pillows; and I *did* think she was an angel, and asked her to make the devil keep off me; and she smiled, and said she would. I believe she could, if anybody;—and when I came to my senses, and she found how thirsty I was, she rang the bell, and spoke to the servant in that gentle, queenly way of hers, that he knew he'd got to mind, and made him bring her fresh water, and powdered sugar, and a great dish of currants, in a trice. And there she stood, you know how, as she always does, so light and yet so stately, like a magnificent white pigeon just come down, in her white *tarlatane*, that seemed to light up the black chamber, and brewed me the nicest drink I ever tasted. Then she sat down by me, and talked, and laughed, and cooed out pretty little cheerful stories, till midnight. Pretty well frightened the nurse was, too, when she came back, to find her there; while all the time we could hear the *teetle-tum, tum, teetle-tum* of the music going on down below; and she was the best dancer there that summer, though unfortunately too tall. She's a real trump! There isn't anything I wouldn't do for her. I declare, if I was anything of a marrying man, I'd marry Clara Arden to-morrow rather than any other girl in Boston."

"Thank you, Bobby; but I should want a little longer notice," said a soft, arch voice at his elbow, as Clara, repassing, curved her white throat, and nodded good-humoredly, but rather mischievously, back at him, over her long, sweeping, snow-drift of a shoulder.

"Good gracious," ejaculated the discomfited Bobby, coloring up to the tips of his fingers, not to say the rip of his glove.

"Served her right for eaves-dropping?" rejoined Mr. Jack Robinson, who was, like a mosquito, very venomous for one of his size.

In the mean time, the supper-room was pouring up its tide into the drawing-rooms again, like a reflex wave from the Spouting Horn; and a few skirmishing waltzes were preluding the last grand engagement.

"By Jove, what a stunner!"

"A screamer! Who is it?"

Neither a pugilist nor a town-crier, as these epithets, (evidently, from the tone in which they were uttered, intended to be complimentary, though otherwise certainly a little alarming if employed to characterize feminine attributes,) would have seemed to imply, was entering the room, but a superb girl of eighteen or nineteen, as tall and fleet-looking, and almost as slender, as Diana's spear, and just now, at least, looking almost as sharp and fatal. Her outline was as oriental as Rebecca's; and she seemed to breathe from every feature an expression of indignant pride, which would not have misbecome that heroine when she threatened to dash herself down from the battlements. At her side moved a slender but very shapely youth, whose height, and age too, apparently, scarcely exceeded hers. He would have been, like her, uncommonly handsome, but for the unnatural paleness which discolored his



fine, earnest, oval, olive face,—a paleness made the more conspicuous by the bright blackness of his moustache and thick, round curls, and the almost blackness of his burning brown eyes. They passed, speaking little, and in tones too low to be heard above the general outcry of conversation about them. He looked much at her; she, straight on with a gaze which seemed to pierce the very walls and the future before her. When her lips unclosed, he grew, if possible, whiter.

“I know who it must be! Miss Constance Aspenwall, of South Carolina. She was to be here. They say she’s worth four hundred thousand dollars, niggers and all!”

“Put it up to a million, while you’re about it, Bob. But, by George, what a temper she must have!”

“Don’t like such a little partner, I suppose,” said Mr. Bob Jones, unrolling, and drawing up his lank five feet eleven of skin and bone, as if he had been a tape-measure, from the divan on which he had been lounging.

“‘I had a little husband  
No bigger than my thumb.  
I put him in a pint-pot,  
And there I bid him drum;’

and then I took a most ecstatic twirl or two with Robert Jones, Junior, Esquire. Guess I shall have to try my luck. If she’s cross, I’ll—”

“Hallo! Why, that’s Herman Arden with her! It’s a perfect *tableau* of Judith and Holofernes! He’s chalky enough already; and she looks as if she’d have her fingers in his hair in another minute. Do you know what he did the other night?”

“Got tight?”

“I should think so. He went and made a nasty sneaking Abolition speech at a caucus.”

"What got into him?"

"The deuce, I suppose. I wonder he dares show himself anywhere among genteel people. He might have known Mrs. Mydass didn't want him here, and only asked him because she couldn't get along without her 'most particular friends,' his brother and sister. He must have some brass to speak to a Southerner after it—a lady especially."

"Hallo, Miss Blaise! I'm not ready for you yet. You know Miss Aspenwall, don't you? Present me to her first, will you?"

"Miss Aspenwall, Mr. Jones. Mr. Jones, Miss Aspenwall."

"May I have the pleasure?" said Mr. Jones, extending his arm.

"I thank you. I never waltz."

"Oh, then, you don't know how much you are losing! One turn with me will whirl every scruple to the winds; and—"

"You will have the goodness to excuse me. Good evening." She swept off to a window, but there she found herself followed still, by Herman. "What does this mean, Mr. Arden?"

"Good heavens, Constance, what *does* it mean? Do you know what you are doing? You know, you must know, how—what you are, and what you are to me!—and that I offer you a heart—not worthy of such a prize as yours, indeed,—whose could be?—but, if there is no tenderness in yours to plead for it, I must say for myself, a true, fresh, loyal heart at least, ready and eager to serve you to the death second only to the God who made you; and to love you only—I dare not say, less than Him,—but only too well; and you trample it in the dust beneath your feet, turn upon me, and cast

me down at one stroke from the threshold of heaven to hell, and reject me, not, (as you have a full and unquestioned right to do,) with womanly gentleness, and consideration due both to your character and mine, but with scorn and insult—with no explanation!—Is this worthy of you?" The color that the smothered vehemence of his low and hurried words had brought back into his face, and the sort of indignant tenderness that glowed in it, made him perfectly beautiful.

Constance's bosom heaved for an instant;—for she was a girl, and not a heartless girl,—but it was only for an instant; for she was a haughty and determined woman. "Perhaps it is not."

"Of your rejection, I do not claim a right to ask an explanation." (Poor fellow! If he had not been the most delicate and generous of lovers, he might have claimed all the right to ask it, that could be given him by as much tacit acceptance of his tacit wooing, as a most maidenly and dignified girl could grant.) "Of the manner of it I do."

"You shall have it."

"When?—I have pressed you far enough already, for such a place and time as this."

"You have, indeed!"

"Oh, Miss Aspenwall!"—

"To-morrow morning, if you please, at half-past eleven."

"Will you allow me to inquire for your coach?"

"No, I thank you. Mr. Van Rooselandt is here."



## CHAPTER II.

## THE KNIGHT'S LADY.

"A daughter of the gods, divinely tall,  
And most divinely fair."

TENNYSON.

*"Être la destinée voilée d'un grand homme, agir par sa main, grandir dans son sort, briller sous son nom, c'était la seule ambition que lui fût permise, ambition tendre et dévouée qui séduit la femme, comme elle suffit au génie dé s'intéressé."*

LAMARTINE.

CONSTANCE ASPENWALL was a very intelligent, very *high-flown*, and, as she would have said with pride, a very high-spirited girl; or, as she ought to have felt, with shame, a very high-tempered girl. She was an orphan. Her only brother had thought himself summoned by the love of glory and of his country, to leave her, in the year 1847, and go and try to shoot some Mexicans, for endeavouring to defend their families and certain lands belonging to them, which these United States would have been much better without, and did not want, but which a few slaveholding individuals thought that they did, for the better holding of their slaves and supremacy. His enterprise terminated in the Mexicans, very naturally, shooting him. The poor young man, though ignorant and infatuated, was generous and well-meaning and deserved a better fate, like many other light-hearted and thoughtless youths, who were butchered like beasts, or broken down for life, in that miserable and wicked war. To make other little sisters orphans and desolate, he left his own, crying bitterly, to the rearing of strangers, and his negroes,

crying more bitterly and with more reason, to the tender mercies of un-overseen overseers.

How the negroes fared, never fully transpired. Colonel Rochemaurice, Constance's cousin, and guardian of her property, conscientiously visited her plantation once in every twelvemonth, and usually found it expedient to place the management of it in new hands; but that was all that he found time to do in regard to it, except to see that a proper amount of produce was regularly forthcoming and sold, and that the proceeds were profitably invested.

Constance herself, in the meanwhile, did neither so well nor so ill as she might have done. The influences of a gentle and genial home, invaluable to a rich but wayward nature like hers, were lost to her. She was kept, for the most part, during the remainder of her minority, at one and another boarding-school at New York, where she imbibed the necessary amount of spelling, arithmetic, and foreign languages, and learned to draw and paint a little, and to play and sing magnificently. She was not generally beloved by her schoolmates, because she did not generally love them; but she always had one or two retainers, who admired her beauty, applauded her spirit, shared her lavish allowance of pocket-money, and, until she fell out with them in their turn, were very fond of her; as they could hardly help being; for, when she allowed herself to be gentle and fond, all the concentrated warmth of her natural disposition burst forth, and warmed the few on whom it fell, as the June sun is hottest when it breaks through a hole in the clouds on an overcast day. She wished to be a queen among her companions. She was crushing in her scorn to rebels; but her obedient subjects found in her a powerful and bounteous protectress.

Alas, poor Youth! How Nemesis stalks at your heels, picking up your every fault, and sowing it, to raise a harvest of sorrow for your reaping in after days! How each of your peccadilloes grows up into a habit! And how are you suffered, rashly, confidently, and unfearing, to entangle and knot the thread of which the web of all your earthly life,—the only life for which most of us care much now,—is woven! Such as Constance had been in her school, such she came out of her school, and, thinking to bend a playful, caressing kitten to her will, laid the full weight of her girlish hand on what rose under it a kingly young lion!

Even when kind to her companions, she “felt,” that is to say, fancied, herself immeasurably superior to them all. They were frivolous, girlish, and childish. Their thoughts ran on dress and admirers; and it had never occurred to her to ask herself whether the indifference for which she gave herself credit, on these points, was not, so far as it was real, the mere apathy of satiety,—a satiety which offered itself to her at *nursery parties* and summer watering-places, long before her regular *début*.—They had no such aspirations as hers. She had a soul all on fire with what stood in her mind for the love of country; and the South stood in her mind for the country, and three hundred thousand slaveholders for the South. The denunciations of the South, which she met with in some quarters, and the equally indiscreet and violent denunciations of those denunciations, which she met with in others, alike inflamed her pseudo-patriotism, and, as a Southern girl, she considered it incumbent upon her to hate the North. If her country would but point out to her some sacrifice which she could make,—some service which she could render to it! If there were only Clo-

rindas now, how she would rush to Mexico, and avenge the loss which, in her gallant brother's death, had been sustained both by herself and her native land! If she had been a man, she would have conquered for it this whole continent, from the pole to the isthmus; nay, perhaps to Cape Horn; (bigness standing in her mind for greatness—a rare mistake!—but pardonable in a school-girl;) and then, mighty in counsel as in arms, she would have consolidated it all into one vast republic. A crown should, indeed, have been offered her by her grateful and adoring countrymen, but she would have majestically waved it aside, preferring to find her own glory in the grandeur and liberty of her exalted nation. The South,—meaning again the Council of Three Hundred Thousand,—should govern it, *c'est-à-dire*, hold its government offices, and fight for it. The supple and pusillanimous, but ingenious and industrious North, should be kept out of mischief, and suitably employed in fetching, carrying, spinning, and weaving, for it; and all within its borders should have been beautiful order, dominion, and glory,—had she been a man. Being not a man, however, she shrank instinctively, as most persons of fine feminine natures will, from wishing herself one, as a kind of sin against her nature. She turned from the dazzling vision, came down from the throne of her castle in the air, and set another Lord upon it in her place, thus:

When she was emancipated from her school, and left behind her the prosaic and grovelling companions and teachers, who could not so much as understand her, far less sympathize with her, she should emerge, of course, like other heroines, into an appreciating and admiring world, all whose unmarried men would at once throw themselves at the feet of a creature endowed with such

wealth, rank, intellect, spirit, and beauty. Most of her suitors would be too far beneath her for anything but her very scorn to stoop to; but among them there would still be one glorious kindred spirit, waiting only for the inspiration of her ardor, loveliness, devotion, and sympathy, to prove himself the mightiest champion and most stainless patriot of his age and time. Him she would cherish with her whole soul, and honor and obey;—yes, indeed, it would be her own will to obey him, her mightier, grander, more magnificent self,—and the beautiful untameable, won at last, would exult in the silken bonds and golden chains with which her love should fondly deck her and bind her to his side.

Ah, Constance! Our wishes often come within our reach in this dim life, but oftenest, perhaps, in a masquerading dress; and so we turn away from them, and are wiser and sadder when it is too late. We strike them down, it may be, with our own hands, and then the mask drops off; and we know them as they lie in the dust before us; but, though we weep and wring our hands over them, they cannot rise again. They are dead, and can return no more, or only as pale Memories, which are the ghosts of Hopes, to haunt us in our lonely hours, with “those saddest of words, ‘It might have been!’” How should the apostate crusader know that the helmeted page is his Rosalie? Why should he not clench “his gauntleted hand” against him? How can Penelope tell, that the wandering supplicant on her hearth is her own longed-for and prayed-for Ulysses? Why may she not set the dogs upon him, or let the other suitors slay him? How can we see whether or not we are spurning our happiness or clasping our woe?

How, indeed, if we are living like apostates or pa-



gans? But there is a certain very old-fashioned, not to say obsolete, Book, which says, "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." And though this promise probably refers more directly to wisdom in the management of one's heavenly than one's earthly affairs, yet the two are closely connected; and heavenly wisdom would certainly save us from the most lamentable of our earthly errors, and from those bitterest of regrets which come when we discover that we have suffered ourselves to be cheated into sacrificing some bliss, offered us by the God who serves us, to some demon whom we at the time were serving.

Constance, however, was not aware that she was in any want of wisdom, nor yet did she consider herself to be living in the least like an apostate nor a pagan; for she went to church at least once every Sunday, when the weather was fine, and scolded herself very hard, not to say very justly, out of a prayer-book. Out of church, to be sure, she thought humility a virtue fit only for servants, small traders, and clergymen. Hell, in her creed, was a very suitable place for dirty, ignorant, and wicked people, who used bad language, robbed, and murdered. It was very meet and right, that they should be kept somewhere out of the way of their betters, or else be burnt up at once. Now and then, likewise, there might be an exceptional condemnation thereto, in the case of some unusually ill-behaved lady or gentleman, who died suddenly, or perversely and unaccountably refused on his death-bed to say he was sorry, repeat his prayers, and send for a clergyman. As for the possibility of anything like punishment for anything she did, ever coming near her in this world or the next, she never imagined any such thing. Her

religion was negative, not positive. It forbade her to commit any State's Prison offences; and if she refrained from such tempting indulgences during her mortal life, which she anticipated little difficulty in doing, it promised to confer upon her heaven at her death, not at all as a favor, but as her due and well earned wages. The doctrine of human neighbourhood and Christian brotherhood she ignored altogether; and, in short, she was just as much of a Christian as she might have been if she had been a respectable Pharisee's well-reputed daughter, nineteen hundred years ago. Her God was the god of battles; and she thought the most victorious of warriors, conquering for his country in any cause, right or wrong, the greatest of heroes. I do wrong, however, to say that she *thought*; for, like most women, (and men, too,)\* she had yet to learn to think. She took for her opinions the first ideas that came in

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\* Let him or her who doubts that daring assertion, take a seat in any omnibus or car that runs four or five miles out from Boston, and in again; and let him or her listen to the common run of the wearers of waistcoats therein, as they earnestly, but hesitatingly, stiltily, in very *newspaper'sh* English, and with an air as of men somewhat painfully overtaking their memories, endeavour to discuss politics; then let the listener, alighting from the car or omnibus, enter the nearest reading-room and, for the argument of the Democrat, see yesterday's *Post*, or *Courier*, and for that of the Whig, the leader in the *Boston Daily Advertiser* or perhaps, if said Whig be a very general reader, some old speech of Daniel Webster's; and then let the listener say whether that daring assertion is not founded on fact.

Now I am far from implying that the arguments which these way-side orators attempt to pit against each other may not be, in themselves, sound and forcible; for editors of newspapers occasionally say very good things, and Mr. Webster did so frequently; that is not the point. The point is that the arguments in question, good or bad, never grew out of the brains adjacent to the tongues that now utter, or try to utter them; as may be inferred not only from our finding,—at the reading-room,—where they did come from, but from the speakers using them against each other with about as much facility and appropriateness as a pair of emulous and painstaking parrots strenuously enunciating against each other from their opposite perches, one a clause taken at random and taught him from one of Fox's orations, and his interlocutor, a sentence chosen for him in like manner from a speech of Pitt's.

her way, and for her worship the first idols, provided only that they had pretty names engraven on their pedestals.

Constance, in due time, quite grew up, (to the height of five feet, eight inches,) and *came out*; but she found the world without the walls of her boarding-school almost as dull and unresponsive as that portion of the world which she had left behind within them, after the first excitement of the really unusual sensation she made by her beauty, grace, and reputed wealth, in a limited number of drawing-rooms in a limited number of cities, was over. At first, indeed, young men were presented to her by (half) dozens, wherever she went. But of these, the *high-born*,—as she was pleased, for want of better, after the fashion of romantic young ladies and a certain school of writers of instructive popular tales, to denominate the sons or grandsons of successful merchants and manufacturers and professional and political men, and grandsons or great-grandsons of farmers and small tradesmen,—proved too often to be of the *calibre* of Messrs. Bob Jones and Jack Robinson, cared more for dancing than for talking in general, and talking on her favorite topics in particular, and stigmatized her as “*slow*,” “*blue*,” and “*strong-minded*.” While the *low-born*,—namely, the sons of farmers and mechanics, (*mud-sills*, in the classic Carolinian tongue,)—who, having come up from the plough and work-bench to the University, were slowly and surely working their way up, to be themselves successful professional and political men,—youths whose minds had been as much more thoroughly trained than hers as her manners had been than theirs,—who could, some of them at least, have fully appreciated her wit and fancy and amply repaid her with their own humor and sagacity,



after their first shyness had been charmed away by a little feminine tact and kindness on her part;—all these low-born youths were, for mere want of the habit of society, set down by her at once as boors utterly unworthy of her society, and repelled and frozen with icy looks and monosyllables.

Having no near relations living at the South, except an aunt whose home was in Baltimore, but whose husband's business carried him frequently to Paris, she had never returned to her native State since she left it, and fell in with few young planters. Of these, fewer still appeared to her to be very liberally educated; and some were even addicted to "commencing to lairfh," "sailing *on* boats," instead of *in* them, and committing other offences too numerous to mention against the idioms of what she had been taught to consider her vernacular, beside further embellishing the communication of their ideas by speaking English with what may be termed the Guinea accent, and introducing from time to time certain startling guttural intonations, evidently learned while the organs of speech were still pliant, in conference with sable masters and mistresses not of the cultivated class of negroes.

Then, again, even among the small number of persons whom she was disposed to like, she found, to her surprise, that not quite all were ready to like her. Some of them, adding to their good minds and manners good hearts, were much displeased with what they heard, if they did not chance to see, of her unamiable and unwarrantable contempt for others, whose feelings and worth they respected. In a word, she soon found herself as little popular out of school as she had been in it, and demonstrated an important proposition, which I here lay down for the benefit of all romance-reading

young friends of mine,—may they be many, when, if ever, my romance is printed,—namely : those who live in a world of their own, can hardly ever get on at all well in the world of other people.

Her circle of possible sympathizers narrowed and narrowed wherever she went, until in Boston, in this present winter of 18—, the Arden family stood almost alone in her liking and in liking her ; but they suited her so well that, in their company, she seemed and felt thoroughly amiable, charmed, and charming. There were only two brothers among them, however ; and Edward, the oldest, was too indolent and epicurean ; and Herman, the other, too little imposing, too little stern and mysterious, and, though two years her senior in age, too *young* in all his ways for her almost despaired-of hero ; and where to look for him, she still could not tell ; when, in the meanwhile, not only had Herman Arden fallen in love with her, which was to have been expected, and not at all extraordinary, but,—without in the least dreaming of such a thing,—such things will happen sometimes,—she had fallen in love with Herman Arden !

How such things do happen, perhaps the people to whom they happen, even, can seldom tell exactly ; but these two people really had some points in common, and seemed at least to have many. Both were very romantic, to begin with ; and he perfectly agreed with her in taking her superb physical beauty for the stamp of equally rare spiritual beauty. Both had earnest and aspiring natures, earnestly yearning after what presented itself to their minds as the noblest and the best. Though neither of them had hitherto discovered it, however, they were unlike in this,—that while he stood ready to tear his way in all directions, save one, through

his most cherished illusions, the moment he had cause to suspect that they were illusions, until he could come at the realities which they veiled, she hugged her illusions, and stood ready to tear, metaphorically of course, every reality, person or thing, which came too near them. She loved the names of patriotism and glory instead of the things; he, the names for the sake of the things. She felt, and did not think; he felt, but thought, too. She esteemed herself a genius; he was pretty near being one, without knowing it. He was mindful of what he considered his duty to his God; and this, and the modest hope that he was so, gave him an inward purity and dignity of life. She was mindful of what she considered her duty to herself; and this, and the proud consciousness of it, gave her an outward purity and dignity of life. Much as, in her secret heart, she loved admiration,—and that was much more than she was aware of,—she could never stoop to flirt nor to be flirted with. Unlike him, she could be revengeful but, like him, never intentionally unjust. She could be arrogant and cruel in speech, as he never was; but her pouting lips knew no better than his own how to frame a lie.

Then, Herman and she liked many of the same pleasures; and people who enjoy themselves together are apt to like each other;—a truism worth the pondering of match-makers. He was an excellent rider, and always eagerly ready to escort her and his sister on his beautiful bay. He sang well in a duet, and read aloud much better. He read her favorite poems to them as they worked or drew, and taught Constance to love some of his, when interpreted by his singularly musical, true, and spontaneous intonation, which often seemed, as she once told him, “as if the soul of the dead poet

had got into his voice." He threw aside his Greek authors, to study Italian with her and Clara; and, though much more ignorant of the language than they at the outset, soon surprised them with the light which his bright eyes could throw, at one glance, into dark places in the "*Divina Commedia*," which had puzzled them for hours. There was no commission too difficult or too troublesome for him to execute zealously for Constance, at the slightest intimation from her that she would consent to accept his services; and they were always offered and rendered with a sort of chivalrous courtesy, which seemed to imply, that in doing her will he did his own, and that to honor her was the highest honor he could pay to himself.

Still, she could only fancy him her page and not her knight, until once, after he had been off on a scientific expedition for a week or two with Mr. Agassiz, she perceived that the page could not be dispensed with, if the knight was not forthcoming; that Herman loved her with all his heart, and that she could not very well help loving him in like manner. Since it could not be helped, therefore, the best thing to be done seemed to be to get the page knighted. In plainer English, though she had now been two years out of school, and the original castle had been a good deal shattered in spite of her, by contact with the hard battering-ram of fashionable life, she wished that the ruins should be manned for her by a helpmeet, who should at least be a statesman high in office; and as Herman was so fond of her, and so very clever and obliging, she believed that she might make him the profitable servant of her ambition, supporting the comparative weakness of his character by the strength of her own. She understood that his family, in all



its branches, had always belonged to that wing of the Whig party which belonged to Slavery. She would with him return to South Carolina, where her family-interest was powerful, and invest all the ready money she could raise, if necessary, in negroes. Their votes should in part elect him to Congress,\* and her beauty and popularity,—for, to promote such an object, she would stoop for once to court popularity,—should do the rest. Once in the House of Representatives, with his natural abilities and the stimulus which her commanding energies should give him, what should stop him? She saw, through no very long vista of probabilities, herself presiding like a queen at the White House, and him Commander-in-Chief of the American Army.

Herman, also, had his secret day-dreams, in which love, patriotism, and glory figured largely; though it remains to be seen how far they could be made to coincide with hers. God is the only common end towards which all men and women can press forward, side by side, and ever nearer to one another, in harmonious, converging lines; most other objects do but lead them asunder, or make them cross one another's paths continually.

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\* Constance here, like some others, labors under a slight misapprehension. Individual masters do not vote for (*i. e.*, against) their individual slaves. The wrong done by *black representation* is wholesale, not retail. "Representatives,"\*\*\* says the Constitution, "shall be apportioned among the several States, which may be included within this Union, according to their respective numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole number of free persons, including those bound to service for a term of years, and excluding Indians not taxed, three-fifths of all other persons." Thus the few white voters in a Slave State, in which the majority, being slaves, should not vote at all, might have as many Representatives at Washington as the many white voters in a Free State; and such nominal Representatives of slaves, being usually slaveholders, uphold slavery year after year, and speak and vote down the liberties alike of blacks and of non-slaveholding whites.

On the night before that of the ball, Herman signalized his coming of age, by making, in an informal public meeting professedly open to men of all parties, his maiden speech. All sorts of opinions were expressed about it, of course, according to the notions previously fixed in the minds of the hearers. The radicals present stigmatized it as time-serving; the *soi-disans* conservatives as seditious; but all the judges of oratory, who did not happen to be too angry to exercise their judgment, were agreed that,—though rather too good for the occasion,—in eloquence, scholarly finish, and statesmanlike information, it would not have been unworthy of William Pitt at the age of the speaker. Furthermore, Dr. Lovel, a certain dear old divine, who chanced to be among the hearers, and whose very heart was sore with the denunciations of one party and the sordid cotton talk of the other, stayed a day the longer away from his rural parsonage, to drop in on Clara, (with whom he always ate his Sunday beef when he preached in town,) and enchant her with the assurance that, if Herman could but indoctrinate the rest of the youths of the country with his spirit of enlightened and self-sacrificing patriotism, he would do as great a work as Washington's, free the slaves and masters at the same time, and cement the Union more indissolubly than ever with universal peace and good will. Clara sent out to Whitney's immediately for worsteds and canvas to work two pair of beautiful slippers, one for the praised and one for the praiser.

And Constance! Was not she enchanted, too? She was furious,—I beg her pardon, indignant;—and the little scene at the ball was the result. But then, to do her justice, the news first reached her through one of the partisan newspapers,—those licensed false

witnesses against their neighbours!—and it rang the knell of the Union and the nation with a bell with Herman's tongue in it.

All through the next day,—most unlucky of Fridays,—he had not once been near her,—for a very good reason. He was correcting and re-writing his speech, from the copious notes which a very rapid reporter had taken of it, that it might as soon as possible be laid fairly and in fair type before the public, in the place of the incoherent or garbled and spiteful extracts and abstracts, which the public was now straining its spectacles and venting its wrath over. The very first printed copy he destined to be laid before his lady, as the first of many laurels with which he hoped to crown her. She might disagree with his discourse at first upon some minor points; he knew and admired her independent spirit; but she was candid and generous, and could not fail to be pleased at finding in a Northern man so cordial an interest in the prosperity of the South, and at finding, in any countryman, so hearty a zeal for the promotion of the highest welfare of the whole country; and then, if his performance was as eloquent and brilliant as some of his other acquaintances told him, how very proud and happy she would be! How very eloquent and brilliant it was, he for the first time perceived, as he read; for, as he spoke, the mighty spirit of oratory had leaped upon him, casting up the riches of his whole being from its depths, and carrying away his self-consciousness as with a whirlwind.

And this man, so full of promise, noble in beauty, loyalty, enterprise, courage, and heroism in the best sense of the word, who loved her as no other ever had, or would or could love, Constance was in the meantime preparing to do her best, or worst, to dishearten,

agonize, and alienate, for what I should be tempted to call a girlish whim, were it not that I might thereby seem so disrespectful as to cast an intentional slur on some of the, so esteemed, most sagacious men among her contemporaries! Her hot temper prevailing more and more, hour by hour, over the warm heart which might have pleaded for him, she condemned him in his absence and for his absence, which seemed to her to add contempt and contumacy to ingratitude and treason; and her hastily-formed purpose, to discard him at once and forever, grew and grew,—like the mammoth snow-balls which she saw the little schoolboys making in the gray storm before the dismal windows of the Revere House,—by much revolving.

At twilight, Herman's task released him. He tossed the last scrawled sheet to the printer's familiar, dressed with particular care, tied in his most faultless knot his prettiest cravat of Clara's selection, swallowed a cup of tea, and strode up and down from one end of the drawing-rooms to the other, until at last his sister appeared, in her blue evening cloak and *rigollette*, with the flowers in her hair peeping out between its strings of tiny pearl-like balls, as if through snow-flakes; and the tardy coachman pulled the door-bell with a hard jerk, to *make believe* it was not the first time he had rung it, and whirled them off to Mrs. Mydass's.

There Herman had placed himself near the hostess, watching the door of entrance, and come forward to meet Constance, as she appeared in it, with such an expression of joy, affection, and hope just dashed with modest doubt, as should have made her thank her God, and humble herself before Him in the presence of her great happiness; when she for the first time treated him as if he had been a poor and awkward student,—



*i. e.*, like a dog. Then following that strange blind instinct of our nature, which makes us, when evil threatens, greedy of the worst,—which makes the young wife look up into the face of the messenger who has come to tell her that she is a widow, and cry, “Don’t tell me he is sick! say he’s dead!” though she dies of the news,—Herman, like Samson, bowed himself, and pulled his fate down instantly upon his own grand head, unshorn, if crushed. He had offered her his hand, and for the first time, in words, all the wealth of his manhood and his love. The offering was rejected, as, under the circumstances, only an added affront; and just there, and then, we found and left them.

## CHAPTER III.

## THE KNIGHT'S TRYST.

"I have not slept; for that I am to blame."

PHILIP VAN ARTEVELDE.

"Oh, friend, are we indeed the sport of Fate?

Was there no clay wherewith to touch mine eyes,

That they might see thee in thy true estate,

Good with the good, wisest where all were wise?"

GAIL HAMILTON.

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CONSTANCE went home to her hotel, and sat up all the rest of the night in her dressing-gown and shawl, "preparing herself" for the morrow. A very poor way, my dear little girls, of preparing yourselves for anything, unless by and by, perhaps, in some crisis of life such as sometimes comes even to creatures as gentle as you, and not many years older,—in some great perplexity, or sorrow, or joy, which drives your sleep away,—you pass the hours of darkness in thanksgiving, or prayer for guidance and comfort, and in duteous consultation of God's word, after the manner as I suppose of holy men and women of old time. Now a vigil may be a very good or a very bad thing, according as God or Satan is one's fellow-watcher. If you wish to judge of the nature of Constance's, you shall have the benefit of some of her meditations. They were plausible; but so, sometimes, is Satan.--

At last, her early longings were fulfilled. Her country *did* call upon her for a sacrifice. The sacrifice should be rendered, even to the last drop of her heart's

blood, if indeed her heart could ever bleed for a recreant and traitor. *If* it could, it would deserve to bleed, and to be torn out and trampled upon by her own hands and feet. (A rather difficult operation for a person unskilled in anatomy, and an awkward one for anybody to perform upon himself.) She would never disgrace her gallant forefathers! (She did not know much about them; but I have been credibly informed, by one who did, that she did them injustice; that they were very sensible, though somewhat prosy and commonplace old planters, who would probably, if they had not labored under the double disadvantage of being dead and being unaware of the state of the case, have desired her to say her prayers and go to bed like a good girl, and try to get up wiser.) She was glad that Herman had asked for an explanation! It should be such a one as should show him of what a prize he had proved himself unworthy. But, might not she suffer afterwards? Hardly; and if she did, what was suffering in a good cause? Her self-respect and proper pride would come effectually to her aid. She had made a mistake,—that was all,—in fancying a possible future resemblance between her ideal man and Herman, and had only to rejoice that she had discovered it before it was too late, and to return to her old allegiance. She would make up her mind before he came, what to say and how to say it in a few conclusive words, which should open no door to discussion. No wily northern tongue should cozen her out of her principles. She would have the matter over, and forget it. She thought of Jephtha's daughter, and was sure that she herself must be very much like her, though she could not,—for, in spite of anger and the real regret and misgiving which she was beginning to

feel, though not to acknowledge, she was growing exceedingly sleepy,—at the time remember precisely what it was that Jephtha's daughter did.

In the meanwhile, she was becoming very chilly. The wintry dawn was so long in coming, that she began to suspect a repetition of the Dark Day, or an eclipse of the sun; and, when it came, she looked so pale and plain by its murky gray light, and her eyes were so blood-shot and swollen, that she was afraid Herman would think she had been crying, and she had not!—at least not much, and it was only because she was tired and out of spirits, and had no mother nor anybody to care for her, and felt sorry to lose the friendship of Clara Arden, who would of course be sure to take Herman's side, right or wrong;—sisters always did so, and she wished, for her part, she had one, too, poor girl!—So she threw herself on her bed, under an eider-down quilt, and, when her maid came, bade her call her again at ten; slept two hours, rose, feeling if possible more weary, irritable, and wretched than before, drank a cup of strong coffee, which, as she could eat nothing with it, merely added a sort of universal tremor of body and mind to her previous discomfort; had her thick, long, fine black hair exquisitely dressed to the further torment of her aching head, and in her elegant morning-dress walked down stairs, supporting herself by the banisters, to a private parlor, which she shared with her present *chaperone*, Mrs. Courtenay Van Rooselandt of New York, and which, as that lady was dressing to make calls, she now had to herself. She sat down and waited a quarter of an hour. Her head throbbed more and more. The door-bell rang.

“Mr. Arden—”

“Show him in.”

He was in the room. She looked up and rose. Each saw how very pale the other was; and one was sorry. She had intended to shorten the interview by not inviting him to sit down; but finding herself unable to stand, (lo! the consequences to one's nerves of *preparing* one's-self!) she was forced to sink again into her chair, and to point to another. He moved towards it mechanically, but only leaned upon the back of it, and stood looking into her face.—He would not begin.—Then she must.—She must collect her ideas; but how could she, with her brain all one swollen pulsation, and with anybody looking at her in that way? But what splendid eyes he had! and how strangely manly he looked, for once in his life!—No matter.—As these thoughts passed, or rather jerked, through her head, she put her hand to it involuntarily. He started, and half reached a bottle of Cologne water. She rejected it with a gesture, and recollected her part: “You understand, I trust, that you are here to receive, not a retractation, but an explanation merely, of what seemed to strike you as so unaccountable last night.”

He flushed, but bowed, still without speaking.

“I was surprised, I own, in my turn, to find that it could be thought to require an explanation; but no one shall ever have an excuse for saying that I have forgotten, in my conduct towards him, what is due to myself and to a woman of honor. My explanation, since you require it, is, that I have heard of your speech.”

“From the newspapers?”

“From the newspapers.”

He brightened instantly and sat down, drawing, as he did so, his chair an inch or two nearer to her. She receded in proportion, and slightly gathered towards her the wide folds of her drapery.



"I cannot wonder, then, at your displeasure. I must explain"—

"It was you only, I think, Mr. Arden, who desired an explanation; and pardon me if I say that you have had it, and that I am now about to be otherwise engaged."

"And you are determined not even to hear what I have to say for myself? Oh, Constance!—Miss Aspenwall,—have I been so utterly mistaken? Have I only my own presumption to thank for my hope that at some future time,—not by the mad precipitancy of last night,—for that I can never forgive myself,—but by the patient devotion of months and years, I might win—your affection?"

"A common woman would answer, that you had only your own presumption to thank for it, and would hide, by a shameless falsehood, her shame at having allowed her preference to be won by a person incapable of rewarding and retaining it. I am not a common woman; and I shall stoop to no such meanness. It is no shame to me, to have been led on to—almost—love the man you seemed."

He started up: "You almost loved! Then, noblest, dearest, sweetest,—love me! Love me, Constance!—O, Constance, Constance, I don't know how to seem!"

"Excuse me. You seemed, though a Northern man, a perfectly liberal and unprejudiced man; and you are an Abolitionist."

Constance's love of repartee was breaking up the ice between them, almost as fast as Herman's love of her. Pride and affection were tilting in the scales; and the expression of delighted hope, at the instant in his face and voice, tossed pride up almost to the beam;

out Satan, having been invited in to the conference, stayed without urging, and stood by all the time, ready at need to put in his foot, heavy as the Indian fur-dealer found the white man's hand.

"So some of the newspapers say, I know," answered Herman; "and so are you an Orthodox Christian, and I too, I hope; though both of us go to King's Chapel, and neither of us to Park-street Church or the Old South, with the so-called Orthodox *par excellence*. What's in a name? I have no intention, I assure you, of binding myself to do the bidding of any political party; but this name of Abolitionist is a very vague one and may be applied to a very great variety of people. May I ask what you know of them?"

"Quite as much as I wish. I know that they are a set of wild and lawless people, who are ready to drown their native country in blood, in order to take away the rights and property of their neighbours and to undo all that their fathers bled and died to do,—of judges that neither fear God nor regard man; preachers who preach sedition, schism, and skepticism; and conceited vixenish women, going out of their sphere to meddle with what they know nothing about, and dictate to men in politics."

Constance was getting *upon the stump*, which is often, if not usually in one of her sex, equivalent to putting herself in a false position. Herman's good-breeding could always keep the corners of his mouth in order; but anything comical which came in his way, even in his sadder moments, was invariably as flint to steel, to his eyes; they would sparkle at it without his knowledge. Besides, Constance's evident thawing had raised his spirits; their disagreement was assuming the air of a very harmless, sociable lovers' quarrel; and they—



were chatting together as if soon to be again on their former terms or more. Constance saw in an instant the weak point in her oration; and in another mood she would have laughed outright; but Satan applied that innocent involuntary little sparkle (why should a *spark* not sparkle?) to her pride; and it exploded, and blew him up at once. Did Herman mean that her adjectives "conceited" and "vixenish" applied to herself? (He never dreamed of such a thing; but it had occurred to him, as she spoke, for the first time, that she might not at her age be so accomplished in statesmanship as she was in music and *belles-lettres*, or as she might be by and by, and yet that she had shown some little disposition to regulate his public course.) Such abominable impertinence! How could she ever have imagined that she liked him? With a sudden change of voice and aspect that terrified him, she exclaimed, "It is time to put an end to all this!"

"Good heavens! What have I done?"

"Must I say it again?" cried she, adroitly shifting her ground, and in a manner moving the previous question: "You have lifted your voice against our country, against the noblest part of it, and the part to which I belong,—and against warning besides; for I had been more frank than you, and been at no pains to disguise my utter hatred and scorn of Abolitionism!"

"I certainly knew that you disliked some of the extreme doctrines of some of those who wish for the abolition of Slavery; and you knew that I did. I did *not* know that there was one word in my speech, from beginning to end, that could give offence to a magnanimous, patriotic, Christian woman; and I must entreat, Miss Aspenwall, that you will read it before you condemn it."

*Entreat* sounded a little like *demand*; for he was again beginning to feel that she was using him very ill; but how authority became him! He was really putting on the look of her ideal man!

"And if I should read, and afterwards condemn it?"

There was a pause. He rose, walked towards the window, and again towards her, and then said, in deep though smothered tones, "Remembering the weakness of human nature, I should thank God, that it was spoken before I knew how much it was to cost me." He stopped, but presently went on again, in a voice which grew, though not loud, firmer and clearer: "Having been as candid as yourself, *from the beginning*," (this was said with some emphasis, but not rudely,) "I will be so to the end. I did not know nor believe, that I should offend you by exercising in this matter the conscientious independence of thought and action, which I should always be the first to respect in you, or, if you gave me the right, to claim for you; but I could not and did not conceal from myself the possibility that it might be so,—that in these unhappy days of strife, prejudice, and slander, your judgment might be perverted, though your heart never,—and through your judgment my heart. Therefore I determined to leap in the dark, and put my loyalty to my God, my country, and my kind, at once beyond the reach of any tampering with my self-interest; and thus, what may have looked to you like indifference to your disapprobation, was in reality an excessive,—you may think a very cowardly and contemptible,—dread of it. I should be a suitor utterly unworthy of you, and despised by you in the end, if I were capable of giving up my independence and manhood to any human

being. If I gave them up to any, man or woman, it should be to you. It shall be to no one. I will hold them fast,—so help me God!—as sacred trusts,—sacred to humanity and religion.”

“Religion says, ‘Fear God; honor the king.’”

“Miss Aspenwall, here is no king! O how much those will have to answer for, who bewilder noble, artless, unsuspecting minds like yours, with such wretched sophistries and perversions!—What did our forefathers say to the Tory application of that doctrine, when it ran counter to their liberties?”

“‘Our country, right or wrong,’ I suppose, as every patriot must.”

He looked at her as if he could scarcely believe that he heard her aright; and she colored, as the girl in the fairy story might have when her lips had dropped a toad, not merely for shame at its ugliness but for anger with the person who pointed it out to her.

“And you think,” said he, “that we can serve our country by helping her to call down the judgments of God upon herself?—by fostering and promoting her iniquities?”

“I am no metaphysician, Mr. Arden, to split such hairs with you. Let the subtle North argue; but the South can act, and repudiate, as I do, a Union which can only humble and degrade her.”

“Mr. Otis, ma’am.”

“Show him in.”

“Is this final?”

“Good morning, Mr. Arden. How do you do, Mr. Otis?”

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE FAMILY PORTRAIT GALLERY.

"Look here, upon this picture, and on this."

SHAKSPEARE.

*"Le présent a pour racine le passé."*

EMILE SOUVESTRE.

LATE on Sunday afternoon, Edward and Clara Arden sat in their dining-room, at the opposite ends of the table,—with the finest engravings from Landseer and his compeers over their heads, and between them, in two embossed silver dishes, a heap of Brown-Beurrées, and another of clustering Alexandria - Muscats and Black - Hamburgs brooding on their own green leaves,—and basked in the light of each other's countenances, and of their cheerful soft-coal fire. Leaning her smooth cheek on three or four fingers, which, like marble piers, parted a flood of golden, glossy, flossy curls, she was looking into dream-land; and gazing at her,—robed in the rich purple silk, which he had chosen for her because it became her *blonde* beauty so well, with the gossamer lace that fell over it about her white rounded arms and throat, fine and frosty as if the fairies had caught her in some such trance, and woven it around her out of rime,—gazing at her so, through the soft blue ethereal smoke-wreaths of his cigar, he could have fancied that he was looking into dream-land too, and beholding as fair, sweet, and stately a presence as the luckiest of poets could find there, besides. It was Clara's wont

to be fair, and sweet, and stately; but on a Sunday evening, he often thought that there was a peculiar indefinable charm about her, even beyond that which she always had for him,—a tinge of more supernal sentiment, a certain odor of the incense of the sanctuary still lingering about her as it were,—which made her from an angelic woman a womanly angel.

Perhaps it was somewhat egotistical in him to admire her so much; for they were as much alike as a brother and sister, eminent respectively for manly and maidenly beauty, can well be,—as Apollo and Diana;—Herman said, “no offence to Edward,—as body and soul;” it had been one of the innumerable whims of his childhood to call her, after he had got a smattering of Greek, “Edward’s Psyche;” and the pretty pet name of Psyche had clung to her to this time.—Both of them had the same generous and regal beauty of form and harmonious and regular cast of face,—just not quite Grecian enough to make American Nature seem a plagiarist,—and the same remarkably graceful and agreeable play of features, especially of the lips, which, in speaking or smiling, gave glimpses of teeth that might have moved a dentist to rapture or despair. They were not quite Sabastian and Viola, however; for he was three years the oldest, and seven inches the tallest and six the stoutest, and his eyes were of a less deep dark violet than hers. Her cheeks were usually white, moreover, and his ruddy, often a little tanned, and, further, a good deal obscured by a magnificent *moustache* and beard of rich auburn; while the floating golden sunset-cloud of Clara’s tresses served alternately as a veil and a setting for her lovely countenance. They make so calm and pleasing a picture as they sit there in my mind’s eye together, that I cannot bear to disturb them yet. Let us therefore seize this



opportunity to inquire a little into their *antecedents*. Yet of their and of my knight's forefathers, I shall say nothing. Reasoning from analogy, I suppose that he must have had some. But, (though such are, when ascertained or even merely suspected, whether good, bad, or indifferent,—though often far from estimable or agreeable in their time and, individually, of no manner of use to anybody now,—a matter of most excessive and mysterious gratification to their descendants,) they are apt to be the greatest of bores to the neighbours of the latter. Moreover, they are wont to be attended with the further disadvantage of inducing the latter to inflict upon their helpless offspring, while too young and inexperienced to resist, most frightful catalogues of Gothic and Vandalic appellations, thereby visiting upon them the euphonic sins of their fathers to the thirteenth and fourteenth generation. Besides, the Ardens, father and oldest son at least, were too fully satisfied with the present standing of their family to trouble themselves with many investigations into its past. The former might perhaps, by hard labor and antiquarian research, have convinced himself that his ancestral tree first sprang in the ancient forest of Arden, and that he could, with an unquestionable right to do so, make a melancholy Jaques of one of his sons, and enjoy the peculiar privilege of calling his daughter, Celia Rosalind Audrey Phebe. But such was his republican arrogance that, if he had had any mind to call her so, then he would have called her so as fast as he could say over the words to the christening clergyman, and the clergyman could learn to say them after him, and would never once have thought to enquire whether he had any right to call her so or not. One cannot see that she or he lost much by his omitting to do so, either with or without a right. At any rate he left the



veracious historian, *i. e.* myself, without the slightest foundation whereon to construct a pedigree.

I regret it the less,—not only on account of the disadvantages already enumerated attendant upon the possession of it, but—on account of a disadvantage still greater, namely: the possession of a pedigree often tends to foster the soul-degrading sin of pride; and the quality of pride would appear to be so altogether contrary to the prejudices of the angels,—to the public opinion of that good society into which we hope to be introduced, most of us, some time in the course of the current century,—that indulgence therein threatens to lower our permanent and eternal rank very seriously. Perhaps if some of us could see the present *status* to which the arrogance and selfishness of some of those vaunted ancestors, whose example makes arrogance and selfishness appear to us weaknesses so amiable, have reduced them, we should make less account than we now do of our relationship to them, and rather prefer to hush it up. No! Let us search our family records chiefly to find, if we can, some one saintly man or woman,—no matter how hard-worked,—no matter how poor, and little known on earth,—whose deeds here five, fifty, or a hundred years ago were his or her title-deeds to bear the title of lord or lady high-seraph now at the court of the King of kings. If we can find one such, let us thank God that the blood of that saint, however ignoble here in the estimation of his inferiors, flows in our veins; let us yield to its motions, attune our hearts to its workings, and with a hallowed ambition strive so to walk like him in his Master's steps in humility and self-devotion, that he may gladly condescend hereafter to come forward and claim kindred with us from among the shining rows and ranks of Heaven's nobility.

The married life of the deceased Arden *père* was almost as episodical as that of Blue-Beard. His first wife, Kitty, died in a couple of years after their marriage, leaving behind her his oldest daughter, Catherine, who was brought up in the country by her maternal aunts, and with whom we are likely to have little to do. She had, at the time when our story begins, been for some years the respected partner of Jonathan A. Flint, a broker, a thrifty, busy, earthy, ant-like kind of a man, with warts on his chin and spectacles on his nose. Like a poor wild vine rooted at the foot of a dwarf-oak, she climbed towards heaven as far as she could without leaving him behind, and a little further, and stretched up her groping, unsupported hands towards it, for them both, and tried to be good as well as she knew how, and succeeded pretty well, too, in a certain weakly way.

The second wife, Alice, whom Mr. Arden espoused at the end of the next two years, was a daughter of a Governor of one of the Western States. The disconsolate widower fell in with her at Washington, whither he went to recruit his spirits and represent the commercial interests of "our beloved Massachusetts" in Congress. She was a rare creature, who, after absorbing the sweet influences of woodland, hill, and river, and developing the perfect physical organization, which she afterwards bequeathed as an invaluable legacy to Edward and Clara, in long rambles over her father's large farm, had accompanied his ex-Excellency, when he was sent to the National Senate; and, among the strange medley of people of all kinds and countries, who throng that human menagerie and epitome of the world, the White House, she had rubbed off any remains of rusticity or provincialism that might still have

clung to her, without losing any of the gracious, frank kindness or gentle dignity, which had grown up with her while she assisted her mother to superintend her rural home, or to do the honors of the "Gubernatorial Mansion" in the city. She might have helped to confer upon her little boy and girl other gifts and graces besides her good health, with its natural accompaniments of good spirits, looks, and temper; but, as she was hurrying back from her father's death-bed, to find consolation for her first sorrow in their rosy kisses and chubby embraces, she was killed, or murdered,—call it which you will,—cut off by a violent and agonizing death in her benign and glorious prime, by one of those accidents in our public conveyances which slay so many of our countrymen. She was dragged out breathing, a ruin from the ruins, and lived long enough to see herself a mangled cripple, and to try to press her husband's hand, but, happily, lived no longer.

The young stranger had already, in her brief residence among his acquaintances, so endeared herself to them, that all State Street, Beacon Street, Park, Chestnut, and Mount Vernon Streets, seemed to ring with one outcry of horror, grief, and indignation. Mr. Arden's nerves were shaken by the shock to such a degree, that he was incapable for months of thought or action; but some of his friends prosecuted the company of the fatal railroad, in his name. The grossest carelessness was proved on the part of an ignorant and stupid underling, who had been employed, apparently, not because he was known to be capable, but because he was supposed to be cheap. The company were made to pay a certain price (which they were rich enough to afford to do pretty easily, out of their past and future

economies in the wits and wages of their servants) for this wife and mother, quite as if she had been a negress. It was the price of her blood, and her husband loathed it. He took it, notwithstanding, in order to make, so far as he could, a wholesome example of her destroyers; and, thinking of his own little bereaved ones, he endowed with it an asylum for orphans.

Mrs. Arden, the third, was a pretty, sensitive, tearful little devotee, who went almost directly from her sick-room in her father's house to her sick-room in her husband's. Morbidly and narrowly conscientious, in her fears lest she had done or should do wrong, she seemed to forget that she could be wrong simply in not doing. Especially, she forgot that most important general order to the church militant on this anxious earth, "Rejoice alway; and again I say unto you, rejoice!" Thus her heavenward march, wanting the heavenly music of gladness and hope to inspirit it and to allure others to join it, lagged sadly, became a crawl, and would have been an utterly solitary one had not her little Herman, her only and her husband's youngest child, come to put his tiny, puny hand in hers and move beside her through the latter years of her short and sorrowful pilgrimage. He was her constant companion in her hushed and darkened chamber, and, sitting on his little stool, as it were in the shadow of death, never making "a noise to disturb poor mamma," and feeding on broths and jellies, looked as pale, as unearthly, and almost as thin, as herself, so as to justify, in the opinion of the few visitors whom she at long intervals admitted, her own belief that he was doomed very soon to precede or follow her to the other world.

On the other hand, however, Sally Dalley, (a poor

neighbour of the second Mrs. Arden, at the West, who, having been befriended by that lady in her youth, had thought herself incredibly favored in being permitted, when her rich husband came to carry her off to New England, to follow her fortunes as a sort of female versatile *fac-totum*, and was at that time doing duty as nursery-maid to her orphans) ejected over the fast-disappearing hedge of her teeth the opinion, "O'r massy! there wa'n't nothin' under the sun ailed the child,—nothin' on earth but mewin' up an' coddlin'. Land! how'd Ed'ard an' Clary look in one week's time, d'ye s'pose, if they was kept shut up in the dark, an' couldn't git no bread an' milk an' baked apples, nor beef-steak, an' mutton-chops, an' roast puttatures, nor nothin' but blue-monge, an' slops, an' so on?—nor couldn't git out to the Mall, to roll their hoops, an' run, an' romp, an' holler? I declare, I tell 'em sometimes it seems a'most as if they'd take my very ears off. I heared a learn'd man say once, we'd all got drums in our ears. I don't know as we have, nor I don't know as we haint; but I know this, if I don't know nothin' else,—if my ears is drums, them 'ere children's tongues is the drum-sticks. But, la! I always put 'em to bed the second the nursery-clock strikes seven;—an' I keep it a little fast, 'cause it's best to be punctooal;—an' then there's peace till six in the mornin'; an' I tell 'em, if they'll only be good children an' love each another, an' 'let dogs delight to bark and bite' like 'birds in their little nests,' I can stand a sight o' good-natur'd noise."

"Sick!" Sally was once heard to say, (and it would have cost her her place but for Mr. Arden's tender memory of her faithfulness to his dead Alice and her little ones,) to another guardian of youth, in answer to



some kind inquiries about the present incumbent, or *re-cumbent*, "I should think she might be!—sick o' doin' nothin'! I reckon if she'd jump out of her bed and make it up for herself, as Miss Arden,—*my* Miss Arden, I would say,—would, when we was short o' help, 'twould do more good to her dyspepsy than layin' in it all day. I wish I could have the shakin' up of her feathers once,—with her in 'em!"

But Sally's opinions on this point were not entitled to so much consideration as, from her general sagacity and good penetration, they would have been if they had been less tinged with jealousy of her mistress,—I beg Sally's pardon,—her mistress's successor. Yet, though she indulged herself in the luxury of this amiable feeling, as I regret to state that she did also in that of snuff, it is due to her to add, that she secreted both with equally conscientious care from her charges. Hurtful indulgences are commonly thought fit for those only who have arrived at years of discretion. We may allow them to ourselves; but we must keep them from the young. Well, perhaps there is some philosophy in it, after all. Keep the spring of life clear, and its after-current may be so. Taint the one, and the other scarcely can be purified save by a miracle of renewing grace.

Sally's excuse was,—not for the snuff, which was wholly without palliation, but for the harshness of her judgment of the poor inoffensive invalid,—that she took very little notice of *her* (Sally's) children. Edward and Clara were admitted to their new mamma's chamber, to get a kiss and a bunch of grapes or an orange, usually once a day; but that was all that she had to do with them. Their father, for his part, was too busy in making money for them. to learn how to



play or talk with them, or even to find out that he owed them any further parental duties except to keep them at the best schools, which he took pains to do. Beyond this and a remarkable absence of natural depravity in their dispositions, there appeared to be nothing earthly to guard them against the ordinary perils of childhood and youth, as they outgrew the constant companionship and the authority of "Nursesey." Mrs. Arden, whether her illness had been originally a *mala-die imaginaire*, and since aggravated by self-indulgence, or not, became really too ill to do all that her predecessor would have done for them, and was too timid, procrastinating, and unenterprising, to undertake even as much as was in her power. A step-mother as she was, she said, how could she hope for the charitable construction of her neighbours or even be sure of her own motives, if she attempted to assume the responsibility of managing the children of another? Perhaps she should be stronger next year; but at present she felt that her very life depended upon rest and quiet, and her first duty was to her own son; so that she did not see that she could do anything for the dear little things, better than to intrust them a little longer to the care of the faithful though very peculiar servant whom their own mother had chosen for them. Sally would be very likely to leave them at once, if her management of them was interfered with; and it really seemed to agree with their rugged constitutions, though it would certainly have been death to Herman.

To the suggestions of more persuasive tongues than Sally's, which reached her from time to time with regard to him, she opposed a mild but unconquerable *vis inertiae*. She wished that she was able to take him out more. She never left him behind when she was well enough

to drive; and she hoped to let him go out to play as soon as he was a little stronger; but he was so fragile and sensitive, and the other boys were so apt to be rough; or he was a very delicate child, and as he had been confined to the house a good deal by colds in the winter, she did not think she could with prudence send him out regularly, until the spring was far advanced and the danger of east winds coming up was over; or now in June, the mornings and evenings were so chilly and the sun so powerful at noon, that there seemed to be no time fit for him to exercise in out-of-doors; or he had been so completely prostrated by the heat even when kept within-doors with every precaution, that he could scarcely be in a state to walk out before the autumn; or, if the climate of this insalubrious planet was for once, by some rare chance, well adapted to the needs of its inhabitants, she missed him so dreadfully while he was out, and was so afraid that he might be run over by the horses or fall into the water, or that he might get into bad company; and he was so pure and innocent now, that she could not bear to think of it!

Clara and Edward, to be sure,—who, envying his sick-room privileges and privations alike, that is, not at all, regarded him with the greatest admiration, interest, and pity, as an unnatural curiosity of wonderful beauty, intellect, and fragility,—were always trying to get him into their possession for an hour or an afternoon, to ride on a sled, slide, play ball, or walk with them; and they, in the meanwhile, thanks to a good Providence, partly, perhaps, to their good, dead mother,—who can tell?—(no thanks, certainly, to their living one,) were growing up to be a very well-behaved and well-informed lad and lass, and by rare good for-

tune or good taste, affected no associates who were not of the same stamp. They would have held over their little half-brother the kindest and most watchful protection. But Mrs. Arden's nerves, or want of nerve, got the better of her more and more. She could not let Herman go ; or, if she did, she cried till he came back. After the little fellow found that out, he could scarcely be induced to leave her side again. Clara might creep behind the chamber door, and peep through the crack, and beckon as much as she pleased. He was sorry, but steadfast.

"Oh, Psyche, what a beautiful dress! Come into the dressing-room, and let me see you in the light. How bright you are! see; I have to put up my hand over my eyes. You are all like a rainbow; and your shining head is the sun!—No, beauty, I can't go. Mamma isn't so well; and if she wakes up, and finds I'm not here, she'll tremble all over so, you don't know. But when you get back, just come up to the door, and whisper 'Herman' very softly, and then I'll ask leave, and slip down stairs with you, and sit on your knee; and you can tell me all about what you saw, and the Common, and the Frog Pond, and the dear little ships, and set me some more sums, on soft paper,—couldn't you?—that won't crackle, because mamma hears the pencil on my slate."

Clara was not very fond of her books, but she was of her teacher, and of some of her schoolmates, who were studious girls; and her attachment to them carried her on with them; so that she was able to give the little prisoner all the aid he wanted in his English studies; and before he had outgrown her knee and her lessons, he was readily promoted to Edward's. Study and reading were an unspeakable relief to the monotony of

his strange and solitary little life; and it was a pretty and a singular sight to see his tiny figure lying at length on the carpet within the window curtains, enclosed in a sort of trench of books with a ray of light, through the shutters carefully parted just above his lifted head, sliding down over his curls to fall on the Greek or Latin page before him. He loved to read Shakspeare, Milton, and Scott, aloud to his mother, when she was well enough to hear him. Whether she was well or ill, she heard him read some selected passage from the Bible daily; and, as the bones of some birds are dyed by madder mingled with their food, so his very inmost frame of mind seemed to take a heavenly hue from its heavenly nourishment. The seed was not merely scattered, but planted. He not only read the Gospel, but believed, and took it all quite in earnest. Was it childish in him? He was but a child; and "of such are the kingdōm of heaven." He was not fond of exhibiting himself to strangers as a prodigy of piety, or, indeed, of any kind; but when he was quite alone with his mother or Clara, long before the Greek days and when he was still almost a baby, he would both hear, and ask questions which were not always easy to answer, on every-day principles.

"But, mamma, why don't we and papa go about and do good, too?—We could go in the coach."—

"Poor mamma is too weak and sick, darling; and papa is busy; and Herman is only a little child; but by and by, if he lives to grow up, he must try to be as much like the Saviour as a mere man can be; and now he shall have a dollar-bill to give papa to put in the contribution-box, next Sunday, for the poor people."

"No, thank you, dear mamma, you shall give that yourself; but I think I had better let papa put in my

dear little gold one for me, that Neddy gave me to buy a rose-bush ; because it would be more like the poor widow,—wouldn't it?—and so the Saviour might like it better than my giving him your money. He's rich enough already, you know, because he is God's son ; and his Father has got all the silver in the stars, and gold in the moon, and all the diamonds and rubies down in the black mines underground in my story-book, and all the pearls and treasures down in the bottom of the great, high gurgling sea. But he only wants to see whether we care more about him than we do about keeping anything else we've got ; and if we do, he'll like us just as he did the poor widow," &c. And then mamma would smile and go off into a doze ; and the little pale creature would sit, and think, and watch her between his dark ringlets, with a countenance as pure and bright and solemn, as that with which his angel might, at the same moment, have been beholding the face of his Father in heaven.

As we have seen, one feeling which lay at the root of Mrs. Arden's mode of education,—and which covered up, in the eye of her conscience, the love of self-indulgence which was her immediate motive,—was her solicitude for Herman's spiritual welfare. They were in all probability to enjoy little more of one another's society on earth. She must insure to herself his society in heaven. In short, she was afraid to *trust* him in the world in which his Maker had appointed his probation. Her mistake was probably a much rarer, perhaps a safer one than that of virtually granting the freedom of a city, without precaution, reservation, or oversight, to the incautious, susceptible, chameleon soul of a child. Still there were great dangers attending it ; and an obvious one was, that her son,—when he became



his own master, as sooner or later, if he lived, he must,—would, seeing his conspicuous inferiority in some things to other boys or young men, for very shame become shameless, and imitate them even in the wildness and wickedness which, being too often the brand, are too often mistaken for the stamp of hardihood. Even if he escaped this peril, how was her hot-house sensitive plant ever to endure hardness as becometh a soldier of Christ? She might reasonably have anticipated, to be sure, that one or two years more of her management would have so enervated his physical frame, as forever to cut him off from the dangers and duties of active life; but

*“ L’homme propose,  
Et Dieu dispose.”*

When Herman was twelve years old, after three days and nights of watching and terrible anxiety, which he endured with an agonized self-control which, in him, surprised all who witnessed it,—during which he was never once undressed, and slept only by snatches beside her on her death-bed,—he saw his mother breathe her last, and was carried in Edward’s arms from her chamber, in fits. It was midnight. He went from one swoon to another till morning, but was well enough on the day after the funeral to be brought down stairs between his brother and sister, and laid on the sofa in the drawing-room. He was very gentle and submissive towards them; but his grief, though borne patiently and silently, seemed too heavy for his little strength to rally under; and, in the course of the following week, Clara, while re-arranging the chamber which his mother had occupied, thought she heard something from Sally in the dressing-room, about “the

child," and "not long for this world." Sally was summoned with unusual haste and emphasis.

"Nurse!—what was that you were saying about little Herman?"

"La, Miss Clara, I didn't speak,—not to you, I would say. I was only a talkin' to Bridget about somethin' or 'nother. I ask pardon for disturbin' of you, I'm sure. I didn't know as you was there."

"Nurse, did you say he was going to die?"

"Well, Miss Clara, I'd rather not undertake to remember exactly,—if it's all the same to you,—the very words as I was a sayin' on jest that minute. My memory's gittin dreadful poor; and 'taint best never to undertake to tell nobody nothin' 'thout you knows it. It's app'inted to all on us sometime or 'nother to die, as the minister says;—not till bumbye I hope, 'cause the best on us aint hardly good enough yet."

"Nurse," returned Miss Clara, evading ghostly counsel and drawing her girlish figure up to its full height, (five feet eight precisely in her little high-heeled boots,) "little Herman is *not* going to die. I shall see about it." Words of power, as Nurse knew. Clara very seldom, in those days, undertook to "see about" anything; but when she did, it was usually *seen about*, and well.

"La, well, Miss Clara, dear, I s'pose then he won't. There! Don't you cry! Don't you cry! Red eyes is very pretty for the rabbits; but blue ones is the nicest for you."

Just after the street-lamps were lighted that afternoon, and one minute after the chaise of the family physician, Dr. Brodie, deposited him at his door, which was opposite to Mr. Arden's, the doctor's bell rang sharply; a light, quick, fluttering sound ran up his stairs; and a tall weird figure, black from head to in-

dia-rubbers, appeared in his study. The rain-spangled shawl, which was wrapped hastily about the top of it, fell back; and out came the golden curls and fair flushed face of his young favorite, Clara.

“Why, my dear! Is it you? What is the matter? Is Herman sick?”

“Yes, Doctor,—no,—I mean he’s no worse to-night; but he does not get better very fast; and I want to know what I shall do to make him well.”

The Doctor was very sorry for her, and a good deal at a loss. He was a busy man, and intent upon his business. In the sick-room, he usually saw the sick person he came to see, and nothing and nobody else. Herman’s positive ailments up to this time had been few; for nature seemed, in the beginning, to have intended him to inherit from his father a constitution which, though slight and susceptible, was elastic and enduring. Dr. Brodie had never happened to inquire particularly into his habits, or to suspect the almost total want of air, exercise, and proper food taken with proper appetite, which had gradually paved the way to his present condition. He thought it a mysterious and desperate one, and could not bear to say so to the hopeful, loving young creature, who came to him with so much confidence. He soothed her by entering very sympathizingly into a long conversation upon the subject, in the course of which he discovered causes, indeed, more than sufficient to account for the state in which her little brother was; but if they explained it, they scarcely made it less alarming. He doubted whether Herman could survive the immediate effects of the mismanagement from which he was suffering, and whether, even if he did, his life could ever be a blessing to himself or to any one else; but he finally

told Clara that he thought, "if Herman was taken at once to the sea-shore, kept in the open air as much as possible, and away from his books, amused, induced to play with other children, and judiciously fed, it might save him," adding, with a mental reservation, "if anything could."

No sooner said than done. Clara engaged him to call that very evening after tea, "to tell papa;" conferred with Sally Dalley; was called the next morning at five o'clock, for the first time in her life; still more strange to tell, rose when she was called; breakfasted on an egg, as being at once compendious and nourishing; ran out and bought two travelling-trunks; with Nurse's assistance packed them, and a basket of provisions; kissed her father; hugged Ned, who came hurrying and gaping down stairs just before it was too late to bid her good-bye; made him promise to write to her every week and,—without much difficulty,—to spend his whole vacation with her; ordered round the coach, put Sally, two pillows, and Herman, into it; jumped in herself, and drove away with his head in her lap, in the soft June morning, to lodge for five or six months with the family who cultivated a large, old-fashioned farm belonging to her father, on the sea-shore not many miles from Boston.

Here Miss Clara passed her time profitably, in "astonishing the natives" not only by her beauty, but by her doings. For the first five or six days, to be sure, she was scarcely seen; for Herman, overcome with fatigue, soothed by the rich, heavy salt air, and lulled by the slumberous, ceaseless murmur of the sea, slept from morning till night, and from night till morning, while Sally took care of him through the dark hours, and his sister through the bright ones, dividing

her attention between him within, and the beautiful oracles without the window, flashing like lightning from one full-blossoming apple-tree to another, viciously tweaking the blossoms, and interspersing these performances with their startling, reedy, rollicking whistle. But at the end of this period, she with him made her appearance out-of-doors, in a gray gingham and *flat*. She sat with him in the woods, and hung him about like an idol, (as he was to her,) with oak-leaf wreaths and pine-leaf chains. She milked the pet Alderney into his mouth, and gathered wild strawberries, raspberries, blue-berries, and thimble-berries, into that ever receptive and commodious cavity. She called the farmer's children about her, and, with him clinging fast to her hand, took the lead in most uproarious games of puss-in-the-corner and the old-man's-castle. She wrote to the Doctor for leave to let him bathe in the sea, and set Sally to make them up some bathing-dresses, and Edward to teach them to swim. She soon proceeded to climb with him into the hay-carts, and, reclining in the scented hay and clover, made luxurious progresses through bright meadows twinkling with butter-cups, and shady grassy lanes among the wild green hills, balmy with the breath of evergreens, and strown, as if by the giants, with huge mossy rocks, while rough ridgy pole-fences, sticking out of their sides here and there like the back-bones of mastodons, completed their antediluvian expression. She rowed him in a boat; she went jogging about, with him before her, on the back of a plodding old cart-horse; and, in a word, she played with him such pranks as were never heard of in, or imagined possible to, that discreet and decorous young woman before or after.

This was Herman's first actual face to face, and



hand to hand, introduction to his mother earth ; and he passed his time in a sort of wondering rapture too deep for expression, except that once, in a confiding mood, he told his sister he had dreamed that the farm was the Garden of Eden, and she was Eve without any snake, and with leave to eat apples if she wanted to, though she liked the peaches better ; and he was her son Abel ; but Cain had been sent to a boarding-school, (which was Herman's great horror, and equivalent for a banishment to Siberia.)—Clara still had to allow him to read his chapter in the Bible every day, though other books were strictly withheld. He could not go to sleep without it ; for he had “ promised poor mamma.”—Towards thanksgiving time, she brought him back to town, with the last chestnuts in a bag as a present for the Doctor, alighted at that gentleman's door, and in triumph exhibited her patient to him with cheeks redder than her own ; and hers bloomed to such a degree, that she looked like Gambadella's portrait of her mother come out of the frame ; that for one young admirer whom she had left behind her, she now had two, which is saying a good deal ; and that she was pretty unanimously pronounced to be the handsomest girl in Boston that winter. She had “ seen about it. Little Herman ” did not die.

There was now nothing morbid left visible about him, except his more than girlish shyness and sensitiveness ; and these might cling to him through life, unless done away with by the companionship of other boys. He was therefore placed at once at the Latin-School. There his lessons gave him no trouble ; and though Edward, who, with all his indolence in other matters, was quite English in his devotion to boyish and manly exercises, was fain for very shame to give

him private lessons in their own yard in sliding, and on a solitary spot on the Back Bay in skating, before he could suffer him to exhibit his attempts in either to his school-mates, he got on, on the whole, very well with them. He had both an ardor about whatever he undertook, and a natural dexterity, which enabled him quickly to overtake or outstrip most of them in anything which required skill rather than strength; and his strength was in the meantime increasing rapidly. Besides, there was a certain magical charm about Herman's nature, which tended to make every one who had a good side turn it to him instinctively. With him, the rough were gentle and the brazen modest; and, though this led him in his after life to form too favorable judgments of his neighbours at first, and thus sometimes to be disappointed in the end, it certainly was in his early days a merciful tempering of the wind to the shorn lamb. He went on rapidly and prosperously through school, college, and the Law School; while his great facility saved him time enough for dabbling in drawing, modelling, and verse-making, in each of which his efforts were crowned with a moderate degree of success while they continued, which was usually until some other hobby happened to be trotted out before him, and not after.

The only marked incident in his history, between his recovery and majority, was the death of his father. Mr. Arden was struck with apoplexy at his desk, and went, in three days, from the counting-house to the narrow house. His children were dutifully as sorry for him as they could be; but that was not so sorry as they might have been. He had been too busy in trying to make them rich, to spare any time for making them happy. Happy they had been; but it was in

one another, and not in him; and about as happy, therefore, they continued without him. He had never been intimate with his children. There were no mutual consolations, rejoicings, confidences, or counsels to remember and to miss when he was gone. All Clara's few little perplexities and troubles had been shared between "Ned and Nurse;" all Herman's, little and great, between "mamma and Clara;" and as for Edward, he never appeared to have any, little or great. They had hardly seen their father through their childhood, except at their meals; and then he was usually tired, and seldom spoke except to enforce upon them the old-fashioned monastic rule of silence at the table. When they grew older, and he would willingly have heard and joined in their conversation, the habit of silence and constraint before him had become too fixed to be easily broken. He did not know how to draw his daughter out; and his oldest son was pursuing his studies at college, and afterwards at Paris. He felt his loneliness on his own hearth sometimes, but ascribed it chiefly to his widowhood. If he suffered, he betrayed it only by increasing gravity and sternness; if his spirits rose, by going more to his Club. Thus, though a most upright and well-intentioned man, or perhaps, to speak more correctly, most free from ill intention, and in money matters a very indulgent parent, he lived little beloved, and died little lamented by his children, and left with them a memory which, instead of being a cherished source of tender, elevating, and grateful feeling, was a briar in their consciences that it was a relief to cast from them; because, though they had no unfilial words nor deeds to reproach themselves with on his account, they could not but acknowledge to themselves that they had said or done very little to give him pleasure.

Edward and Clara moved on towards middle life, side by side, gracefully, graciously, and harmoniously, with a merry mutual understanding, that if they could ever find fellow-pilgrims whom they liked better than one another, they should part at once; but that had not happened. The pet quality of each appeared to be a certain quiet elegance in living, being, and doing, and that each of them beheld possessed in an almost unrivalled degree by the other. As to their moral and religious code, it was much like that of Constance, with two additional clauses inserted, while it was forming, by the early cares of Sally, which decreed that they should read the Bible on Sundays, and go to church twice on that day, if the weather was as good as that which did not prevent their walking and riding through the other days of the week;—and these clauses had a supplement, that probably grew out of the observance of them, to the effect that one ought to do any good office to others which came in one's way, which could be done without putting one's self much out of one's way. In what is called the religious sentiment, Clara abounded, and Edward was not deficient; but it was only another item in their long list of luxuries. Their practice, it must be owned, was much better than Constance's, both because their tempers were, and because they had had a home to grow up in, and some kindly domestic influences to grow up under and to serve as conductors outwards for their general human sympathies; but the example of Mrs. Arden the third had certainly not tended to attract them magnetically to the devout life.

Edward was by this time a physician. He had as much employment as he wanted among the rich, which was a little, and as much as he wanted among the poor,



which was usually none at all. He did not care to be roused from his downy slumbers by night, to soothe the exaggerated alarms of indisposed "exiles of Erin" in Broad Street, nor, by day, to have conquered combatants, with broken heads, borne in by their exclamatory friends ("an' surely!") in hob-nailed shoes over Clara's hall-carpet, into his very-well-appointed library. He baited no trap, therefore, for such miscreants, by putting a sign in either of his windows. His father's door-plate only, left undisturbed, or his servant if he was out, told his friends of his whereabouts; and when they were not very well,—nor very ill,—they sent for him. His parts were naturally fine; and no expense had been spared in his education. He was as skilful as want of experience would let him be; and the beauty of his person, voice, and movements, made his presence seem as appropriate as that of fruit and flowers in a luxurious sick-room.

Clara kept house for him with a goodly *corps* of servants under her, ordered the dishes, and played the pieces, which her brothers liked best. She read a little, embroidered much, went shopping with a full purse, and seemed to herself and others to possess a lot most enviably full of indulgences and void of duties. She went to balls and parties, made calls, had dinner-parties when she could get enough good talkers together, and often sat between times in a mysteriously beautiful trance; as she was still doing late on this particular Sunday afternoon, when Edward, having obligingly left us time for a great deal of gossiping about him and his, at last exerted himself so far as to take his cigar from his dainty lips, between the tips of two ivory-rimmed fingers, and said, "Clara."

She raised her eye-lashes and answered, "*Mio fratello.*"



“Don’t you think you’d better go and see about Herman?”

She looked all astray. A relation of hers once said of her, that, tender-hearted as she was, and efficient, too, when roused to action, another might be fading at her side, or she herself

“Wearing awa’,  
Like the snow-wreath i’ the thaw,”

without her finding it out. She was too full of happiness to suspect the approach of sorrow. Her spirit was so clad in brightness, that shadows passed by and never fell upon her.

Edward continued, “He was walking the floor over my head half the night. You must have observed that he ate no dinner to-day. That sort of thing won’t do for his mother’s son. He must have some weight on his mind. I dare say it has something to do with that unlucky speech. He would never have made it, if he had only had the discretion to consult me first. It’s capital in itself, to be sure, and true enough, I dare say; and he’s a noble fellow; but whom can he get to act with him? Nobody but a mob of unpractical and impracticable fanatics. All the respectable [*usus loquendi*: *i. e.*, respected?] men of the North have got their minds made up quite as stubbornly as those of the South, not to do anything against Slavery, however they may talk now and then just before an election; and if one of them steps an inch in advance of the rest, they all fall away from him to the right and the left, and he ceases to be respectable; and as for our mechanics, tradesmen, and farmers, I suspect they are under the influence, if not in the power, of the *nobs* and the demagogues here,” said Edward, exaggerating as rhetoricians are sometimes tempted to

do for the sake of point and parallel, "almost as much as the sand-hillers and mean white men, that Herman talks about, are there. They have knowledge enough to make money, but not enough to make statesmen. This brother of ours will only get himself into Coventry for nothing; and I cannot see the good sense of giving up all the peace and comfort of life for the sake of these abstract questions."

Clara neither knew nor cared much about the political questions under discussion; but the idea of Herman ill or in trouble had frightened her out of her usual careful courtesy, and nearly up two flights of stairs, before Edward got half through his oration, which he finished notwithstanding, to himself, probably because, having once begun, he thought it too much trouble to leave off.

## CHAPTER V.

## THE KNIGHT'S VOW.

*"Omai convien che tu così ti spoltre !  
Disse'l maestro."*

DANTE.

It seems to be received as an axiom, just now, among a large class of critics both literary and oral, that perfection of moral beauty must needs be in itself a blemish, and render its possessor uninteresting and unnatural. We do not hold these truths, if truths they be, self-evident. On the contrary, there appears to us in our blindness, to be a close analogy between moral beauty and most other kinds of beauty, physical beauty included; and who but a peculiarly barbarous barbarian could think the Apollo Belvidere rendered more interesting or more natural by a hump-back, bandy-legs, or a skull modelled after that of a Flat-head Indian? In fact, the very statement of the above doctrine involves a contradiction in terms. We have seen a great many good people, indeed, who appeared to us too priggish, but never one who appeared to us too perfect.

As that ingenious and liberal moral philosopher and casuist, Increase Cotton, LL. D., teaches however, while it is highly proper to have a judgment of one's own, it would be rash and self-conceited to act according to it, where it runs counter to that of the public at any given time; because charity forbids us to doubt that the public are always conscientious in forming their judgments; and because a hundred, and still

more a million, of heads are better than one,—the case of the Hydra, and a very few others somewhat similar, being mythical and altogether exceptional. It gives me pleasure, therefore, to be able, gracefully bowing in this matter to the opinion of the critics aforesaid, to bespeak their interest and sympathy in and with my hero, by declaring that, at this period of his life, and perhaps to the end of it, he was not perfect at all. Oh, that I were able to conform myself to that further fictitious, not to say factitious, standard of taste, according to which, just as,—though a hemorrhage from the nose, howsoever ill-timed, distressing, or even dangerous to the patient, is comic,—one from the lungs is poetical and tragic; and an extravasation of blood about the heart is not inappropriate to the demise of the most romantic civil hero, (who would seem, indeed, capable of escaping an earthly immortality only by means of pulmonary disease or some accident, unless pounced upon by some convenient and imposing epidemic,) while a similar affection of the brain of an imaginary personage can be rendered affecting or excusable only by a weight of years and virtues in the patient; so certain moral diseases, alias sins, in actual life making the sinner by no means peculiarly engaging, have in fiction acquired a prescriptive right to our regard! I know how much more picturesque, becoming, and appropriate to the fair ideal of early manhood, are the vices of the bandit than the foibles of the boy; but, alas! there is such a thing as truth as well as conformity in the world, even the world of novelists; and truth to my vision of Herman,—as he now rises before me out of my inkstand day by day, like the genie rising out of the casket or the fair Lady of Avenel out of her well,—compels me to own, on

pain of having my sharp metallic pen forevermore rankling like a thorn in my conscience, that he was scarcely more like a bandit than was the fair lady herself, and though beautiful and in his way grand in himself,—whether I can show him to be so by my tame sketch or not,—beautiful and grand rather after the fashion of St. Michael, than that of Satan writhing under his feet.

He had been, up to this time, one of those stainless but somewhat whimsical spiritual knights, who, for want of the inward foes which their fine and lofty natures refuse to afford them, and not having heard as yet the trumpet which calls them to fight an outward battle with evil for their neighbours, are driven to fight a few spiritual windmills now and then. He had inherited a little of his mother's morbid, negative, and spurious conscientiousness. His fastidiousness he carried almost as far as Constance did hers,—that is, almost to a sin;—but if he did lock up the inner treasures of his nature, and give a pass-key to only three or four friends at a time, he did not frown on the rest of the world or push them roughly away from the key-hole, but hid it with a smile, and treated them all the while to so much of his general good-will and urbanity, that they never imagined how much he was all the while withholding from them. He had a strong and burning desire, by success in some art to glorify less his God than himself. Instinctively and invariably kind as he was to all creatures weaker than himself,—women, children, and inferior animals,—his temperament, from extreme sensitiveness, was irritable enough to give him much more trouble than it was ever suffered to give his neighbours; and if anything mean or cruel would force itself upon his notice, he was capable of



being extremely angry, though hitherto he had sinned not, and seldom let the sun go down upon his wrath. He had, in cold blood, a great and overweening dislike to giving offence to others even in a good cause; and when he was grieved, as he still was too easily, his mother's tears had not yet quite forgotten their way up into his bright, dark eyes, though few human eyes were suffered to see them there. Mortifying faults! But he was ashamed of most of them, and struggled with them all as fast as he found them out, as valiantly as he would have done with the more interesting brigand peculiarities to which we have been alluding, if he had had them to struggle with; and if we any of us succeed in taking the kingdom of heaven, as we are bidden to strive to do, by force, it must be by resisting the temptations we have, rather than those we have not. If he had other faults, his friends could not find them out; and it is a curious psychological fact, which in some points of view rather favors the practice of humility and self-examination, that those who honestly and secretly find the most fault with themselves, are commonly the very persons with whom others find the least.

Such as he was, then, Clara knocked at his door. He came to it smiling, though not speaking and looking somewhat pale and dishevelled, and stood holding it hospitably open. She *shone* in, like a moonbeam; and he rolled his study-chair for her up to one side of the fire-place. She sank down in it in her dreamy way, and singing, "The Lord is my shepherd,"—in a low, full, sweet tone, like that of a subdued organ-pipe,—to his favorite air of *Adeste Fideles*, she looked round the room.

It was large and long, though low, and fitted up in

a rich, strange, fantastic style. Part of the furniture was antique, of carved black walnut; and the rest, though modern, carefully made to match. The curtains and carpet were dark. Busts, globes, relics, and oddities, stood on queer little tables against the walls, looking very weirdly in the flickering firelight; and the walls were hung above with old engravings, small paintings, and so-forth. Everything in the room seemed instinct with some kind of significance, and to have been carefully selected to suit the peculiar taste of the occupant. Edward once told him that his "very and-irons were emblematic." Over the mantel-piece was a skull from the catacombs of Rome, which the boy had crowned with amaranth and set up there, in self-mockery, as the likeness of his idol, Fame. On one side, against the wall, the fitful light played on a large marble *bas-relief*, which had been sent him from Rome by a prosperous sculptor, who, on his way thither years before, when poor, ill, and alone, had been befriended by the Arden family, and, much struck by Herman's singular turn of mind and precocious fancy, had taken the design from one of his ludicrously ill-executed drawings. It represented the Angels of Life and Death, floating about each other,—the one robed, garlanded, and buoyant, sweeping upward and onward in chase of a butterfly, which hovered before it, just beyond its reach;—the other, dull and naked, sinking blindly and heavily downward, with closed eyes like a sleeping albatross, a fading morning-glory clutched in one unconscious hand, and the other closing instinctively on one furling wing of its heedless companion, the Angel of Life;—with the motto below, in black letter:

"I am the stanchest hunter, playmate, see!  
Thou chasest butterflies, while I catch thee."

In an alcove, which appeared to be used as an oratory, at the further end opposite to the fire, gleamed the tarnished gilding of two tablets containing the Creed and ten Commandments, which Herman had rescued from destruction or desecration, when a small Virginian ante-Revolutionary chapel was pulled down, and set up here, where they seemed to hallow all the room. On one side of the alcove hung an engraving of Scheffer's "Dead Christ," and on the other, one of his *Christus Remunerator*.

In the midst of this abundance there was no disorder. Everything kept its most tasteful and appropriate place; except, indeed, that the sofa, where Herman had thrown himself again, was strewn with books; for it was one of his peculiarities, and of old Sally's few complaints against him after he came in a measure under her care, that "Master Herman couldn't never read no fewer than a dozen books at a time." The most of these things Clara saw with her memory, quite as much as with her eyes; for, though Herman had evidently been reading and writing, he had turned down his gas, as she suspected when he heard her coming, that she might not see his face too distinctly. On the writing-table she espied, when a jet of flame blazed up from the coals, a freshly written paper, glistening and blotted, apparently, with something besides ink.

"You look rather literary," said Clara, completing her survey, and pausing in her hymn, "What have you to read?"

"Nothing very new: the Bible, the "*Imitatio Christi*," St. Francis de Sales's "*Introduction à la Vie Dévote*," Jeremy Taylor, Henry Ware, and so forth. Clara, what do you suppose those worthies

would have said, to stand in my window, as I did this cold morning, and see the beggars go by?" Herman had never quite thrown aside his old habit of half-inquiring, half-meditative soliloquy, when alone with her.

"That they were sorry for them; as you were yourself, no doubt." He shook his head. "Why, what should they have said?"

"He who hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" perhaps; as the prayer-book did to-day."

"Do you think that means, that you should 'teach them wants they never knew?'"

"Wants of engravings, and cushioned chairs, and carved book-cases? No. I should have an easier conscience, though, to-night, if I had spared a little time and money to supply some of the wants which, I fear, their fortunes have taught them already,—want of work, fuel, food, and innocence."

"Cheer up, then, and do it now if you think you ought. You have not lost much time. You have your life before you."

"Yes;" and he sighed heavily.

"Herman, don't you want to tell me what the matter is?"

"Matter! Why? What makes you think anything is the matter?"

"Because I know. Tell me now, and you will feel a great deal better; you always did; I will make you. My fortitude is *so* great,—equal to any emergency!—it is a pity not to prove it. I see already that you must have done something dreadful,—paid six cents instead of four-pence half penny,—or said you were glad to

see somebody you wished in Vienna, or something else as terrible. Certainty would be better than suspense. Come, let me know the worst at once. Herman, if you won't, I shall be obliged to come and kiss you."

"Kiss me, and I will."

She floated towards him instantly, and bent over the arm of his sofa, and, as her golden shower of ringlets fell upon his face, he clasped his arms around her neck, cried "Mother!" and burst into tears. She was deeply touched. It carried them both back to the time when such outbreaks of feeling had been more common with him than now, and when her tender ministrations had healed the desolate little orphan of his sickness of mind and body; and the sorrow of his young manhood soon flowed out to her almost as freely as his boyish confidences had been wont to do, except that he could not own to her, for he would not to himself, what a spirit his idol had shown,—well nigh her own iconoclast. After the first ebullition of his emotion, however, it was kept down and in with that unflinching, agonizing self-repression which, in the presence of another almost always,—taken in connection with its intensity,—made suffering in Herman so imposing, so affecting, and so unlike that of any one else, and which in his childhood had proved almost too much for his strength or life to support.

He confessed his love,—its delight, suspense, strong and increasing hope,—and then his loss of her who was to have been, who only could have been, his inspiration, his muse, his guiding star, the divinity at whose shrine his hitherto too selfish ambition should have been hallowed, the magnet by which he should have learned to steer his hitherto fickle course steadfastly, *et cetera, et cetera*. Poor Herman! He said it all as



simply as he knew how, and just as he thought it; but he was yet a mere youth, in love, and in first love, and of course he could hardly be expected to

“Ope

His mouth, but out there flew a trope.”

Clara smoothed his jetty curls with her light jewelled fingers, and pitied him so truly, that, even while she said in her heart, “A lucky escape for him and all of us, if she has such a wilful disposition!—if he could only see it, poor fellow!” she could not help saying soothingly to him, “It could be only a girlish freak, Herman. She must love you; nobody whom you loved so could help it. Depend upon it, she is as sorry as you are already.”

“No; she was only misled, and might have been undeceived, perhaps, at first; but she has a high spirit, and I am afraid that my hastiness and harshness estranged her.”

“Oh, my dearest Herman! your harshness never estranged a kitten! If she deserves you and would make you happy,—you must be the judge of that,—go to her directly, and she will be only too glad to see you, and to ask your pardon.”

“I did go yesterday. She was gone.”

“Gone! Where?”

“Away. To her aunt in Baltimore, probably. In the afternoon, I strolled down again towards the Revere House,—I don’t know why,—from habit partly, I dare say; I had not made up my mind to go in;—and I saw her trunks go by on a railway coach.”

“Don’t you think you might be mistaken? Some one else might have the same initials.”

“The Van Rooselandts’ baggage was with hers. I saw their name in full. No; she was determined to

place herself beyond my reach once for all. And so that story's done, my Psyche! No more 'to be continued! We've come to ugly old Finis!' as I used to say, when we read fairy tales together."

The poor youth tried to smile without signal success, sprang up, and began with an averted face to gather together his books and replace them on their shelves, perhaps to give himself time to recover his voice, for there was another story now to be begun.

Returning presently to her with a step which seemed almost martial in his strong self-mastery, he placed her beside him on the sofa. She told me some years afterwards, that she had never been able to repeat the conversation which followed, deep as was the impression which it made and left upon her, and powerfully as it had affected the course of her life ever since. She said: "It was as if I had been sitting on a stone some day, looking up into the sky, expecting and thinking of nothing of the sort; and all at once heaven had opened over my head, and let down a shower of sounds and shown a swarm of sights, such as I had never heard nor seen before, and so could find no words for."

In words firm, but low and brief, for egotism was always a pain to him, he admitted her to glimpses of his inmost soul, which, stirred to its depths as a sea by an earthquake, was laying bare and casting up all its hoarded treasures before the Lord. His brief enjoyment of his love, he showed her, had made an intensity of love indispensable to him. He hungered for it, thirsted for it, fainted for it. When Constance's was taken from him, he could think of nothing earthly that could take its place; nothing could ever take its place, except the love of God. He had spent the day chiefly

in carefully examining the New Testament anew, in order to find out precisely on what terms this love was to be obtained; and "here," said he, rising and bringing the blotted sheet from the table, "is the determination to which I have come,—tried to come."

He turned up the gas, that she might be able to read, but still hesitated, and lingered over it. She took it from his half-reluctant but yielding hand, and read to herself, as follows:

### "ACT OF ENLISTMENT.

"MY HEAVENLY FATHER:

"For the sake of Thy love, and the love of Christ, and the gift of the Holy Spirit offered me by Thy word, I enlist myself to serve Thee henceforth, not after the fashion of these slothful and degenerate days, which I have hitherto most shamefully and disloyally followed, saying I go and going not, but after the manner, so far as in me lies or may lie in the future by Thy grace, of those early Christians, worthy of the name, to whom Thy glad tidings of great joy were first spoken; in body and in soul; in heart and in life; in deed, word, thought, and feeling; bound to no sect or party so much as to that of the Twelve and their Leader; in joy, if it ever comes to me again, and in sorrow; through good report, and, if it must be, through evil report; without reserve; keeping nothing back from Thy treasury, but holding in instant readiness to throw into it, as Thou mayest draw upon me, property, leisure, life, and every power of the body and the soul; resisting the world, the flesh, and the devil, whenever, wherever, and however they may oppose themselves to me in Thy paths, after the pattern held up to me by the one great Master,—loving Thee with all

my heart, mind, soul, and strength, and my neighbour as myself; passing each day as if summoned already to give an account of all my earthly deeds at the judgment-seat of Christ on the morrow; and doing all which Thou dost bless me with power to do to bring about the coming of his kingdom of light, love, and harmony, in this poor, blind, deaf, wrangling, and ignorant world, until Thou shalt call me hence to a higher and holier one; all of which is my reasonable service.

“BOSTON, 18—.

[Signed.]”

“Was Herman mad,—or was almost everybody else so?—But there was little in the paper, thus far, but what we always read in good books, and heard in good sermons, that we ought to do.—But was it really necessary to do it, in literal, sober earnest?—Did anybody,—even among the best of people, could anybody—more than try to do such things, now and then? O, how awful it was! What had *got into* Herman?” Wondering thus within herself with astonishment deepening into terror, Clara ran glancing down over the first page; but, turning to the other side of the sheet, she read, with a sense of great relief,

“No, my God; I dare not sign! How can I dare, fickle and weak as all my former life has proved me, to run the risk of adding the sin of covenant-breaking with Thee, to all my other shortcomings and desertions? I have not the might to give Thee that which is not mine to give nor to withhold. Sign Thou my heart with Thy name, and hallow me to Thyself; and stoop to take that which is Thine by right already, but which is too low and weak to lift itself to Thee. Thou with whom all things are possible, work one more hard miracle, and admit one more rich man into the kingdom of heaven!”

Clara had thought that no life could be more blameless than Herman's hitherto; but, judged by the standard which he was now setting up for himself, or, if he was right, which Christ himself had set up for his disciples, even his conduct had been imperfect; and as, while she pondered in silence, he took down his New Testament again, read aloud from it, and commented upon it, her suspicion that he might be right grew, and grew stronger, and the solemn conviction came upon her, that he was so. As he said, "it was as impossible as undesirable to set limits to the mercy of God;" but, to her surprise, they did not find, in the sacred title-deeds of heaven, that it was secured, or offered, to them on much easier terms than those which Herman was endeavouring to accept.

"Herman," said she at length, reverently lifting her gentle eyes from the paper to his face, "how long have you seen that it was our duty actually to do all this?"

"Not many hours, distinctly, as a man," he replied, "though I think I did as a child. I have known obscurely ever since, that it was my duty to inquire and find out precisely what my duty was; but I could not or dared not; I was too hurried or too happy." He blushed like a school-girl detected in some meanness, and muttered to himself, "Selfish coward! I deserved to lose the happiness which made me so unfaithful and ungrateful!"

"Don't, don't blame yourself so, Herman! You have always been better than almost anybody else. Don't think God is displeased with you, because trouble has come to you through no fault of yours. Don't you remember we are told, that 'whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth'? And in that sermon that you



liked so much, on that very text, Dr. Lovel said that 'sorrows had often proved to be among the very best earthly blessings which God sent' to His saintliest children, and that He gave a double portion of them to His best and dearest Son.'"

Herman's smile shone out, but clouded in again, as he answered, "Thank you, dearest; but they are sent to sinners too; though even then I believe it is in mercy. But I have saddened you long enough with my difficulties and regrets. I have always been too much in the habit of thinking of myself; and now that this blow has fallen upon me, I must rouse myself, and learn to think of others."

"Will you hear a little good advice, for the sake of *one* other?"

"Hear it, at least," said he, good-humoredly.

"Then go to bed now; for you look quite worn out, and Edward says you did not sleep well last night;"—

"I'm sorry if I disturbed him."

"Oh, he did not care, except on your account; he made up for it this morning;—and then let me come back and read you to sleep, as I used to do; and to-morrow, pack your valise, and set off on a little journey."

"I was thinking of that; though it will have to be two valises, instead of one, for the journey is not to be a little one. I am going to the Rocky Mountains."

"To the Rocky Mountains?"

"And further, too, perhaps. Bear's-meat is good for the vapors. You remember the queer, quaint old fellow I brought in to dinner a fortnight ago,—Mr. Grubb, the Indian antiquary?"

"Quite well."

"Part of his object in coming back to civilization,

besides his natural desire to taste what he calls his 'native Indian-pudding and pandowdy' once more before he died, was to get some lawyer to go out there with him, to look up the claims of some of his favorite Gray-Buffalo Indians to some hunting-grounds of theirs, which he says a cheating land-company are trying to cozen them out of at Washington. As neither he nor his copper-colored friends have much pay to offer, this part of his undertaking has not prospered. The business requires a little technical legal knowledge; and part of it can be done only by a person who has been on the spot. Old Mr. Andrews, who has known him, and all about him, from a boy, says he is a thoroughly upright and trustworthy man, and deserves credit and assistance. Therefore, I think I shall volunteer."

"When should you go?"

"This week,—the sooner, the better! I do not know what day. I must send him a note this evening, and find out."

She was going. He held out his hand hastily for the paper.

"May not I have it a few minutes more?" she pleaded, "and copy it,—for Edward and me? You know how sacredly and secretly we would both of us keep it. Dear Herman, it concerns both of us as much as it does you. You would not wish to leave us behind you on your way to heaven."

He yielded; but she did not guess what a sacrifice he was making. It was the first-fruits of his new self-abnegation. She went to Edward, told him as much as she could, showed him the paper, and, looking up doubtfully and timidly through her long lashes, to see how he regarded her communication, saw his calm eyes full of unwonted and tender emotion, and his face

illuminated as if a holy lamp shone upon it. The elder brother was very different from the younger; but his spirit often bowed down in secret to do him homage.

Herman's bell rang; and Patrick, the man-servant, was dispatched with a note to the lodgings of Mr. Grubb, and presently brought back word that he would be glad to start at half-past eight the next morning.

Herman fell asleep that night like a tired martyr sung to sleep by a duet of angels; for Clara, sitting where he could see her pure, and just now earnest and inspired countenance, between his closing eyelids,

“Lent to the rhyme of the poet  
The beauty of her voice,”

and read to him the poems of the sweet and holy Herbert,—that strange, unearthly writer baptized in the mingled waters of Siloam and of Castaly,—the very imperfection of whose language heightens perhaps the peculiar effect of his heavenly thoughts, by making them seem the foreign broken utterance of some way-faring seraph, who has scarcely had enough to do with this world to learn our tongue.

At first, his dreams took a soft and glowing hue from the sweet voice and lines. He thought that, after a dim, groping struggle, and a battle, painful but strangely short, with half-seen foes, who, though seemingly terrific of aspect and sometimes giving him sharp stabs, for the most part turned to thin air and vanished as he successively grappled with them, he had broken through them all, and into heaven, which had all the time been nearer to him than he knew. He was lying to take breath and rest for a few moments

under a palm-tree ; while rapturous bursts of recognition and congratulations of new-comers, by their families and friends, were going on from moment to moment all about him ; and Herbert himself, a noble old harper with a beard of silver, sang a grand song of welcome and triumph in the mighty chorus of which all the angels who flew by and across him joined, just as they happened to pass, as if it was most familiar to them :

“ With sin and the sinning  
His warfare is o’er !  
The earth drops beneath him,  
And heaven stands before ! ”

He could not yet look up to see them freely ; for, having just come out of darkness to great light, he was dazzled ; but to and fro their pinions fanned him with a pleasant thrill, and their shadows continually hurried over him, and over the asphodel turf about him, as those of clouds do over the hills on a sunny, breezy summer morning ; and by the flitting and glancing of these shadows of theirs, he could perceive that they were darting about, and up and down, on their various errands, with the eager spontaneousness and rejoicing buoyancy of sportive birds. All possible failure or suffering lay beneath him now. Everlasting love and joy were won. To-morrow was a word of fear no more, but of certain transport ; and every instant he was listening for the coming of the Saviour, who was to raise him up and strengthen him to bear the new weight of his overwhelming happiness.

He woke. All was still ; and the light was extinguished. Clara was gone ; and he remembered that he was about to leave even the roof that sheltered her, and that his Constance had abandoned him and set her

face against him. The room seemed like a tomb. In this life, there must be some such wakings. Alas for the darker and more fearful awakening to be feared for souls who, too cowardly to bear such as these with courage, hurry from them with suicidal and illicit flight into the untimely and unsanctioned sleep of death !

He struggled, nerved himself, and slept anew ; but now all was dark within him. He seemed to be nailed, a penitent malefactor, to the cross, hanging between heaven and earth. Darkness was above him, and Golgotha below ; but beyond the shadow of the overhanging cloud, which intercepted every ray of light from him and the fellow-sufferers whom he heard, though he could not see, groaning at his side, he looked out into a weary and interminable day. Life went on, near him, though apart. Children played in the streets. They grew. They were youths and maidens. They were men and women. They married. They toiled. They reared children in their turn. They grew gray. They sickened. They gave up the ghost. He saw their funerals go by, and their children's children bear their palls ; and still the interminable day went on, and could not end ; for still the pitiless sun shone on, and would not go down ; and still he could not die. Then at last, through the thick gloom at his side, he heard the expiring voice of Christ shriek out, " My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me ! " With the bound he gave in his agony, he overset his cross. It fell upon him ; and as he came to himself, with cold horror oozing from him at every pore, and found himself in his own chamber and lying in his bed, it was at first with a nightmare sense of material pressure on his body, head, and limbs,—the trace left behind, by the conflicts of the preceding days, on his every nerve.



Poor youth ! Invigorated as he had been already, in muscle and mind, by the healthful activity of his stripling years, the sensitiveness and excitability, entailed upon him by earlier mismanagement, were indeed a heavy cross for him to bear through life ; but at least he rose under it, and carried it off manfully. His alarm-clock struck six. He sprang from his bed, lighted his gas, took a stinging cold bath, dressed with his usual neatness but much more than his usual speed, and bustled briskly through the completion of his packing.

## CHAPTER VI.

## THE ANGEL OF THE HEARTH.

"A perfect woman, nobly planned  
To warn, to comfort, and command."

WORDSWORTH.

"Obedient Yamen  
Answered, Amen;  
And did  
As he was bid."

REJECTED ADDRESSES.

HERMAN ran down to the dining-room for the roll and cup of solitary tea, with which he had requested Miss Dalley, whose versatility was at present officiating as sub-housekeeper and head-cook, to supply him. Quite an astonishing whiff of warmth and glare of fire-light came in his face, as he opened the door; and, at the table,—a still further and more agreeable surprise,—sat Clara! He had taken leave of her and Edward both, the night before, and had had no expectation of seeing either of them again for months; for nine o'clock was usually, at this season, their very earliest time of appearing in the morning; but there she was, in her home-like dark-blue merino, presiding over a larger quantity and variety of muffins, eggs, ham, cutlets, fresh butter, corn-bread, toast, tea, coffee, jam and honey, than the frugal Sally usually found it necessary to administer to her somewhat abstemious consumers in the breakfasts of a whole week. The aspect of the comfortable and hospitable apartment offered a most inspiring contrast to that of the chill, dusky, lonely

chamber which he had just left, disordered with the stir of flitting, and still haunted by the spectres of the night.

Clara was eager to see him do justice to her good cheer. Beginning to do so to please her, his healthy appetite, returning, presently showed what arrears it had to make up; and he went on to please himself, and soon looked and felt a different creature from the hypochondriac dreamer of two hours before, and was conscious of the pleasant stirring within him of a little of the *young-manly* spirit of adventure.

It was going to be his turn now, however, to administer a small portion of consolation. Clara had poured out a cup of milk for herself, and allowed him to put one or two things on her plate; and, if she took very little off, she explained it by saying that, in order to be quite impartial, she ought to eat half her breakfast with one of her brothers and the other half with the other. Meanwhile, she blithely pressed him with, "Another egg? Yours was tiny enough for a pigeon's. Another cup of tea? Not half a cup? That little brown corner of corn bread? A spoonful of jam? Let me give you a little more honey, to finish your toast with,"—till she could prevail no further and saw him, in a traveller's bustling fashion, beginning to push back his chair and compare his repeater with the *Time-piece*, as they called the bronze clock among themselves, from its having a figure of the old destroyer upon it. Then she rose and moved towards him, checked herself and turned to the fire, but, squeezing and almost wringing her hands as she pretended to warm them, she said quite unintentionally, "Don't you think, Herman, you should find it more convenient to wait and go to-morrow?"

"Have you never noticed, dear Psyche"—said he, looking up at her as he pulled on his boots with a sort of pensive, wistful humor in his face, which peculiarly belonged to it, "it is odd, isn't it?—that, when to-morrow is always so much the most convenient day for doing everything disagreeable, nothing ever actually gets done but what we do to-day?"

She returned his smile as gaily as she knew how; but it so happened that, while she was using all her efforts with her red lips to make them spread that signal of gladness, her bright eyes altogether forgot themselves and were so heedless as to drop two great diamonds in plain sight. It occurred to selfish Herman, for the first time, that he was not to be the only sufferer from his own departure.

"Why, Clara!" exclaimed he, "O, fie! What are you watering your blue forget-me-nots for?"

He stood holding one of her little hands in each of his. She smiled again, though dimly. Her smile always set a bewitching round dimple in her left cheek, a perfect kiss-trap. He put his lips to it an instant. She thought they trembled; and that trifling symptom of momentary faltering in his resolution strengthened hers. What a shame, when he had just succeeded in rallying his spirits a little, for her to grieve him again! Could she not wait ten minutes more, send him off in good heart, and then cry as much as she pleased?

"Morning dew-drops make forget-me-nots look all the prettier; have *you* never noticed *that*?" said she, archly, finding her voice instantly, and looking bravely and brightly up into his face.

"God bless you! keep the sunshine in yours."

"And when shall we see you come back, with your

tanned travelling face, and the horrid shaggy beard you'll catch among the buffaloes?"

"As soon as I can, you may be sure. In time for Sea Farm, I hope; and, while I am gone, I shall write, and you will, too, every week, won't you? I'll send you word where to direct."

"Indeed I will; and so shall Ned."

"Don't make rash promises, Miss;—keep that one, though, now that it is made. Where in the world is that Gummage?"

Patrick, commonly called behind his back "Gummage," (having earned his *alias* by his fancied resemblance to that pensive "Angel in the House" of Mr. Peggotty,) had gone to call a coach, which he forgot to do at the proper time. As the bell rang again, and harder, he made his grotesque appearance at the door in enforced silence, with one of Herman's valises in each hand and an umbrella in his mouth.

"The coach there, Patrick? All right. Put them in."

A hurried embrace in the drawing-room, and Clara had let him go, and stood by herself, wondering how she had ever made up her mind to do it. He was shaking hands with Sally in the hall. The horses' bells jingled. She peeped through the window-curtains. He was gone. She proceeded to cry as much as she pleased, according to her *programme*, for a few minutes; but then she heard Edward call for his shaving-water; and it occurred to her that, as it might take her some time to leave off, she had better begin to do so at once. She ran up to her dressing-room, bathed her eyes, fed her canary, hummed the prettiest air she knew, watered her fuchsias and myrtles, and had her sorrows put out of sight if not out of mind, before



that young Sybarite required her to pour out his coffee.

Everybody knows how long a day is, which is begun in this manner. When Patrick had carried off his tea-cups and saucers, and Edward had sauntered away to see if there was anything new and gratifying to be found at the hospital, the room looked strangely empty, dull, and formal. She unlocked her own particular private drawer in the French-desk, took out her copy of Herman's paper, sat down in her high-backed low chair with it, read it once more, as her only present means of hearing from him, began to consider how she might best act upon it in her own case, and looked from it thoughtfully into the fire. The fire gave her a hint: Certainly. What a comfort it was to have a little light and warmth to turn to on such a snowy, dreary, *home-sick* sort of day! She rose, returned to the desk, took from her pocket-book a bank-bill, enclosed it to one of the city-missionaries with the simple direction, "For fuel for the poor," gave it to Patrick to deliver, and took up her embroidery, feeling better.

The clock ticked; the ashes sifted whispering from the grate; while still she, in a needle-woman's desultory fashion, pondered, as she wrought, on the contents of the paper. Accustomed as she had been from earlier times than she could remember, to do as a matter of course whatever she saw that it was proper for her to do, she was well-practised in the alphabet and *a-b-abs* by which she was now to read the first lessons of a higher obedience. She was not perplexed by the question, which so often convulses less docile minds when duties present themselves, To do or not to do? but only by that much less perturbing question, to which an answer may almost always be found by a sin-

cere inquirer, What to do? She was generous and devoted, and lived almost wholly in her affections,—her religious affections among the rest, though hitherto they had been much more sentimental than practical.

Herman had read to her the evening before, with that awe-struck earnestness of his, which gave such thrilling reality and power to the dead letter, that most solemn and tender declaration, which was henceforth to be the key-note of his life, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Now, if she had reason to believe that her Saviour himself was in Boston at that time, in sickness, poverty, or any distress which she could relieve, she felt that it would have been impossible for her to content herself to sit down so indolently day after day in that warm, luxurious room, without a single effort in his behalf; but that she must have hurried out with eager inquiries to find him, lavish upon him her superabundance, and do her very utmost to soothe and comfort him. Yet she had been contented to amuse herself thus there day after day, while there was only too much reason to fear that some, whom he would hereafter affectionately welcome as brothers and sisters, must be continually suffering near her, from all those evils and furthermore from the thoughtless neglect of self-indulgent triflers like her. What should she do about them now?—go out alone and unguided to seek for them? She did not think that that was exactly the thing. She might be imposed upon, and do more harm than good; and, besides, she was pretty sure that Edward would not like it. Perhaps Dr. Brodie would know of some among his poorer patients, who would be the better for some little delicacies, books, or a happy face looking in upon

them now and then ; and if they needed money, so much the better ; for she had a good deal more than she knew what to do with. She would send in for him and his wife to drink tea with her that very evening, and ask him.

Then, model young ladies in edifying English novels taught gratuitously in schools continually. That, again, did not seem precisely the thing for her ;—everything here was so different. She laughed quietly to herself at the idea of the probable consternation of the teachers of any one of the Boston Public Schools, at the tall apparition of the stylish and fashionable Miss Arden, coming in, long after prayers and in the midst of all the “mental arithmetic” and so-forth, to offer to hear the children say their texts or to instruct them in the catechism. Another good suggestion ! The Kneeland-street Sewing-school. She had heard her friend Kate Lee wishing that she had some one to take her class there, while she went for a few weeks to Philadelphia. She would offer her services ; why did she not think of that before ?—and perhaps she should discover some of the deserving paupers she was in search of among the parents of her pupils. She wrote her two notes to Mrs. Brodie and Miss Lee, and returned to her seat and her musings.

She had given a little money, which she did not want. She was going to give a little time. That was all very well ; but was it enough ? She recollected something, which she had once heard her old friend Dr. Lovel say, in a sermon on the high-hearted exclamation of David when the equally generous Araunah offered him as a gift all that he required for a sacrifice, “Nay, but I will surely buy it of thee at a price. Neither will I offer burnt-offerings unto the Lord my

God of that which doth cost me nothing." The reverend old gentleman had said that, though in his opinion we were scarcely called upon to sadden our service of God and man by any self-imposed austerities for Austerity's sake, yet that no Christian, in the most prosperous lot, could thoroughly fulfil all the duties to which Providence called him without much self-denial. It had puzzled her a little at the time and did so now much more, as she recurred to it with deeper earnestness. She knew he was much more likely to be right than she; for he had had much experience in his long life, and was a man of much sagacity as well as of saintly excellence. But she could hardly remember anything in particular that she had considered her duty, which she would not rather do than not.

Suddenly the thought struck her, that she had never been quite so attentive as a good sister ought to be to her sister, Mrs. Flint, and that she had now neither seen nor heard of her for two or three weeks. A struggling sunbeam fell upon the carpet beside her. She heard the snow-shovels without, scraping the brick *side-walks*. It was clearing up, though the wind still sounded bleak and bitter. She would put her work away immediately and take a good, brisk, freshening walk to Blackstone Square, which would be a benefit to two worthy females at once and most satisfactorily disagreeable to one of them. She was soon safely secreted in her muffling furs and shaggy little snow-boots, and on her way.

Her half-sister, Catherine, had been brought up many miles away in the country, by two rustic maternal aunts, who were displeased by Mr. Arden's speedy second marriage, kept her to themselves, and never promoted much intercourse between her and his other

children. Her mother had been a rather pleasing exception in a rather unpleasing, though otherwise unobjectionable family circle. She was a little rustic *belle*, with whom he accidentally tumbled in love when a boy *rusticated* from college, to whom he engaged himself, to the intense disgust of the elder nobles of his house, (the house of Arden, Duke & Company, merchant-princes,) and whom he married seven years later, from a sense of honor quite as much as of affection; though he carefully retained a moderate degree of that. The second Mrs. Arden,—one of those thoroughly *dear* women, whose pleasure it is to begin at the beginning, and do every one of their duties as graciously and gladly as they do everything else,—felt her heart warm towards her husband's little orphan when, two or three weeks after their marriage, she first heard of her; would fain have taken her for her own, and, failing in that, sent many little gifts and most sweet little notes to her “dear little daughter,” never forgetting to insert in them courteous messages to her protectresses, which by degrees mollified them so much, that the child was to have been dispatched to pay her a visit on the very Thanksgiving to which she was returning, when she was killed. After that, there was little more intercourse between Catherine and her father's household, than a formal interchange of letters from him to her, and her to him, once a quarter. She seldom came to town; and when she did so, usually, according to a custom established during the lifetime of the third Mrs. Arden, stayed with an old widow, a cousin of her mother's, at the North End. She felt bashful, awkward, and out of place, in the elegant establishment of her silent and abstracted father, and it never came into her head,—she was not original, and



nobody had put it into her head,—that it would be well for her to endeavour to show an older sister's solicitude and tenderness,—and thus repay some part of the debt of gratitude which she owed their mother,—to the fair, self-possessed, magnificent boy and girl, who seemed so sufficient to themselves and to one another, and who, when summoned to the parlor to entertain her, did the honors with a mingled ease and reserve which would not have misbecome a prince and princess. Soon after her father's death,—as soon, almost, as it was ascertained that he had left her fifty thousand dollars,—she was married. Mr. Flint's vulgarity—"not to put too fine a point upon it"—of manner, made him very distasteful to her sister and brothers, and his vulgarity of mind, more particularly so to Herman; while her own rusticity and the mild, insipid *eau-sucrée* of her appearance and character, offered few counterbalancing attractions to their pampered disrelish of commonplace.

Near relations, however, like coupled hounds, can, from the very stringency of the tie which binds them to each other, scarcely avoid being not quite indifferent to each other; they can take their choice only between being friends or foes. The feeling, which was negative on the part of the calm Ardens, was by this time, after a hardly-conscious succession of slights from them,—some real, and some naturally imagined in consequence,—in a fair way to become very positive on the part of Mr. Flint, whom Nature (or, as he would have poetically said, '*Natur*!') had made a good hater. Catherine's heart was incapable of rancor towards any creature; but its general lukewarmness was certainly growing colder on the side towards her father's family, under the influence of her husband upon her mind,

which was of that colorless, chameleon sort, that generally takes its hue of opinion from any other mind at the moment nearest. Matters were thus quite in train for that pretty and creditable thing, a family feud. Clara bestirred herself none too soon; though she never knew or even suspected how much petty annoyance, or worse, was saved to her and hers by her tardy promptness. Who, that walks unpricked and unstung in the straight path, ever can discern or calculate the number of briars or scorpions that were lying in wait for his erring foot, on the right-hand or on the left?

Mrs. Flint's door was opened to Clara by a wild-looking Irish girl, with smut on her face, suds on her arms, and a rent in her duster-colored apron. She understood the English language but imperfectly,—well enough only to tell fibs in it. (When St. Patrick exterminated the reptiles among the shamrocks, did he drop and leave behind the serpent's tongue there?—and if so, why?) The Irish dialect was not among the number of Clara's fashionable acquirements. Therefore was the information possessed by the handmaiden elicited but slowly, after the merciful fashion generally in vogue in refined circles when anybody is doomed to hear a piece of bad news, which consists in the lingering process of piling deliberately up upon one another a sort of ascending scale of dolorous lies, each one a little nearer the heart of the hearer than the last, until at length the truth is brought up to give the final stab;—a method similar to that pursued by the ingeniously compassionate, imported man-servant of a fellow-citizen of ours, who, when ordered to cut off the tail of his dog, considerably deprived him of it only an inch at a time: “Miss Flint wa'n't to home.—She was engaged most partic'lar.—She was sick to her bed, and

couldn't see nobody, indade,—not if 'twas the President."

As it was not the President, Clara thought that admittance might perhaps be obtained. She was anxious, and grieved besides. It was a proof and *reproof* at once of her past remissness, that her own father's daughter should be lying sick so near her, and she, know it only by chance, and then be forced to stand thus parleying, a stranger with a stranger, at her door.

"Won't you say it is Miss Arden?"

"Miss Harding?"

"Oh, no; Miss *Arden*. Can't you say it?"

"Yes, sure, Miss."

"Try again, then, and let me hear you."

"Miss Andiron."

"No; say Mrs. Flint's sister. How unlucky that I did not bring my cards! Be so good as to get me a piece of paper and a pen."

"Is it a pin, Miss?"

"What did you say was the matter with Mrs. Flint?"

"Well, indade, and I think they said it was just the plague, Miss," returned the Orphic Biddy, with a rich specimen of what pedants and pedagogues call "the rising inflection."

Clara could not help laughing; and, partly to hide her mirth, partly to get out of the cold, and partly to help herself to writing materials, swept by her into a dismal little parlor,—more dismal than ever now, from its look of desertion,—which ordinarily served as a complication of dining-room, drawing-room, and day-nursery. Biddy stood for an instant spell-bound, then crowded in with her, and with much presence of mind

locked up the tea-spoons; after which, with an air of expectation, she planted herself in a "come one, come all!" attitude, with her back against the door of the china-closet. Clara in the meantime tore off a piece of the margin of a newspaper, and wrote upon it as well as she could with a tiny gold pencil, which usually enjoyed quite a sinecure place on her *chatelaine*:

"My dear Catherine: I have but just heard that you are not well, and I am so sorry. I hope you will let me come up-stairs and see if there is not anything I can do for you or the children. I am afraid you must have been very forlorn, shut up in this cold, long storm. I came out on purpose to see you. I can't bear to go home again without knowing exactly how you are, and doing something to make you feel better. Your affectionate sister, C. L. A."

The cordial, simple words were balm to poor Catherine's heart; for she had been feeling very helpless and lonely. Besides, it was always exceedingly difficult for her to say no to anybody or anything.

"Betty," said she, to a prim, homely, anxious-looking child, who was sitting upon the foot of her bed, "it is your dear Aunt Clary. Run down, and ask her to please come right up-stairs."

"Tan't we tidy you up first, ma?"

"No, little dear. We mustn't keep dear aunty waiting. Ask her to please excuse the looks of things, for poor dear ma is all in a muss."

Betty obediently went, but with a housewifely look of regret round the dark, disordered room, and a straightening pull at the rumpled counterpane. It was very good of her to venture; for she was shy; and, having very seldom seen her Aunt Clara, she was much afraid of facing alone such a vision of mysterious splendor.

Clara was standing, rapt in contemplation of the many little clothes flapping and freezing on the lines in the yard, with the elder Flint's capering among them like a dancing-master in the midst of his pupils, and thinking with compassionate wonder of the many stitches which it must require to make and keep them in order, when she heard a mouse-like squeak at the door. Turning round, she saw the tiny, changeling figure of a child of five years old, upright and stiff, dressed in an ugly, but neat *mousseline-de-laine*, of primitive cut. Her face was sallow, intelligent, and as mature and joyless as that of a care-burdened woman of thirty; her forehead was unbecomingly large and prominent, as were also her dim, bluish-gray eyes; her mouth, just large enough to admit a cherry without crowding, was ruefully drawn down at the corners, like a caret, to signify that her nose was an after-thought, and must not be over-looked;—a most unnecessary hint; for it was altogether too big for her, and looked like a grown-up nose snatched in haste, and clapped on her by mistake, from a wardrobe of noses;—her cropped black hair was perfectly smooth; and her neck, hands, and arms, clean, but red and chapped with the cold.

“How do you do, dear?” said Clara. “Come and give me a kiss. What have you got to say to Aunt Clara?”

The fairy, coloring with bashful fright, involuntarily retreated a pace, with a musquito-like whisk as if blown away by the advancing flounces, repeated like a parrot, “ma tays, won't you please walk up-tairs, and please not look at her, 'tause she's all in a muss?” and, having discharged its conscience of its burden, fled before her face.



Clara glided after, and up the uncarpeted stairway. The house was a large and fine one, which Mr. Flint had taken by the foreclosure of a mortgage from an insolvent premature speculator. Intending to sell it, as soon as the situation should have become fashionable enough to enable him to do so to advantage, he had thought it worth his while to furnish only an absolutely necessary number of rooms in it; and it had an uninhabited, chill, cheerless look and feeling.

The invalid made an effort to stretch out her hand, as her visiter appeared in her chamber, but at the same instant turned away her face, with the instinctive shrinking from observation of an habitually neat person caught in an enforced *déshabille*, and said, with a tone of very genuine gratitude sweetening her usual rustic whine, "Dear Clary, how kind it was of you to come and see me!"

"And how kind it was of you to let me! What is the matter? How long have you been so unwell? Why did you not send us word?"

"O, I didn't think of troubling you, dear. It ain't anything, I expect, but a cold. But it's kind o' stiffened up my shoulders, so as I can't put my hand to my head; else dear ma's hair wouldn't look so all in a frizzle, would it, dear little Betty?" The tip of the little brown mouse's nose was peeping out from her nook behind the blue-and-white check bed-curtains; but it was instantly drawn in again out of sight, like the head of a tortoise. "I ain't fit to be seen, I'm sure. I'm real ashamed to let you see me; you always look so nice; but I seemed to kind o' hanker so, you know, after some of my folks to come and set with me. The city's such a dreadful lonesome place to be sick in,—so different from what it is to home,—up to South Brad

lee, I mean. It always makes me real home-sick when anything ails me. Up there, you know, everybody knows everybody else; and if anything's the matter, there's always lots of folks to run in and take right hold; and aunt was such a good nurse. I do miss her so. If it hadn't been so awful cold and snowy, I'd have sent for her to come down; but I expect the roads are all blocked up. Why, I hain't even so much as had my face washed to-day!"

"Do, pray, let me do it for you."

"Why, deary, I couldn't begin to think of no such a thing,—in your elegant gown and all!"

"I'll take off the skirt, if that will make you feel easier about it, and turn up my sleeves, and tie an apron round my neck; I will brush your hair, and plait it up snugly for you, too, if you feel able to bear it."

"Well, I declare, you're so good! I'm sure I don't know what to say!"

"I will tell you," said Clara, as, perceiving that her offer was a tempting one, she quickly and quietly took off her bonnet and prepared her dress; "say where I shall find your sponge, and towels, and brushes."

"Oh, dear little Betty will hop and get 'em in half a second for dear Auntie Clary, if you *will* be so kind. It's imposing on good-nature, I'm sure! It's real delightful to feel your soft, dear little hands. My Abigail was a-coming to clean me up, after Bubby went to sleep; but I had him vascinated last week, and he's got a dreadful sore arm; and it makes him so arbitrary, she can't hardly lay him down a second without his screeching out so grieved, it sets me all in a perspiration. And when she's in a drive to get to him,

she's so quick and kind of, thorough, I hate to have her come near me when I'm all so sort of tender."

The little sprite, Betty, had already flitted off on her toes in her will-o'-the-wisp-like way, and returning marvellously soon, with all the articles ordered collected in a small wash-basin, set them down on the floor just within Clara's reach, and jerked herself back again, as if feeding a rattle-snake and expecting its spring. In a few minutes more, without being bidden, she had obtained from her crony, Biddy, a small jug of warm water, which she brought very carefully, with all her tiny red fingers and thumbs spread out like lobster-claws on the brown sides of it. She stooped forward to set it down, and rebounded as before; after which, she presently, by a subdued, mouse-like rustle, scratching on the partition, and sly peeping, made known her return to her watch-tower, a high-chair between the wall and the further side of the bed, at the opening of the curtains, which she held on each side with each hand, just far enough apart to protrude her nose betwixt them when unobserved, and shut it up like a clam when detected.

"How long have you had this cold?" asked Clara, as she brushed and stroked the scanty, but fine and silky light-brown hair,—her father's hair,—so like his own, as she had smoothed it across his dead forehead, that it seemed impossible that her fingers could be making their first acquaintance now with this, and that it appeared to reproach her for having left his child, as near and perhaps as dear to him as she, so long untended in her patient sufferings and solitude.

"Well, it seems a good while; but, come to think of it, I don't believe it's much more than a week since I've been abed,—a week last Sabbath. Why, that was

yesterday, wasn't it?—this is washing-day!—so it was! Not but a week. I've had a cold, though, most all winter. The spaces in this house are so dreadful long and draughty! I never could stand cold very well; so to home they used to cosset me, and I always had the sleepin'-room, that opened right into the keepin'-room; and when it was cold, or anyways chilly, I could always put my double-dress on, and step right in there and do my hair in the morning, early, before the folks began to call. 'Tain't healthy to sleep with a fire in your chamber, folks say; and husband don't like to have the furnace lit, only now and then to keep the pipes from rusting, 'cause he says 'twill make us tender; and I most seem to get frozen stiff, nights and mornings, dressing and undressing myself, and running up to the nursery, and down to the kitchen, and all."

"Have you had any advice?"

"Well, no I haven't. I hope I shall get along without. Abigail wanted me to see the doctor, when he come to vascinate my babe; but she was out, attending Bible-class; and I was asleep; and Bridget carried Bub down; and nobody thought of it. Mr. Flint observed there was a doctor down-town that owed him some money, and worked great cures,—an electorizer;—and, if I don't get better before long, he talks some of having him come up to electorize me; but I don't know as it's just what I want."

Clara privately resolved that Dr. Arden should pay her a visit the next day, and ascertain her wants.

"Husband says, if the ladies only had to work for their living, and other folks's living, too, as hard as he does, he guesses they wouldn't be down sick quite so often!—the gentlemen are so funny!" added the poor little woman, trying to force a feeble *he-he* with tears of

weakness welling up into her eyes, as the unwonted and tender attentions which she was receiving imperceptibly drew out her confidence ;—" but I tell him, ' if doing all the cutting-out, and fitting, and house-keeping, and half the mending, and making, and cooking, and nursery-work, for five people, ain't working hard enough for one's living, I don't know what is.' "

" Where is your little Tommy ?" said Clara, fearing that they were getting upon dangerous ground ; " sha'n't I see him to-day ?" She had made Mrs. Flint very comfortable and neat, and was now hovering lightly about the chamber, turning confusion to order everywhere with a noiseless touch ; while her sister's charmed gaze followed her, as if thirsting to drink in the fulness of calm life and animated peace, which always made her very aspect at once so strengthening and so healing, so soothing and refreshing, to any one in any kind of suffering.

" He's up in the nursery. He froze one of his feet a little, Saturday afternoon, playing snow-ball in the yard. Mr. Flint don't allow him to wear woollen socks, because he wants to harden him ; and Abigail was going to fix it up for him with some sweet-oil and cotton-wool ; and she set her foot down, that he shouldn't set foot down here again till he had his foot done. But I'm afraid he won't. He's always as impudent as a tiger to her, she says. I guess she don't know exactly how to manage him ; it takes father for that." Then came a little, involuntary sigh.

" How do you think it would do for me to run up to the nursery, and see about him ? Perhaps he will be good with me."

" Why, dear, I couldn't only be too thankful to have you, I'm sure, if you'd really like to ; but I can't



seem to bear to think of all the trouble I'm a-giving of you. Abigail is just as faithful as faithful can be; but she has her hands over-full when I'm taken off; and the poor little things miss ma. You go right straight up-stairs, and it's the right-hand first door."

Clara could easily have found the nursery, with no other direction than that afforded by the *menagerie*-like symphony of jumpings, whimperings, and scoldings, which issued from the door, half-opened to let the smoke out and barricaded with a chair to keep the children in.

"Let 'em alone!" blustered frost-nipped Tommy; "you sha'n't touch 'em, I say! They're my toes, and not yours!"

"Well, sir," rejoined Abigail, "I'm sure nobody don't want to deprive you of 'em."

Clara tapped softly. There was a temporary cessation of hostilities; and a sharp-looking, black-eyed Nova-Scotia woman appeared at the barrier. She was of cylindrical form and, being clad in bottle-green, strongly resembled a walking vinegar-vial of pickled virtues. Clara's benign and lady-like aspect was as a spoonful of soda to the vinegar. It effervesced in simpers, bows, and curtseys, became insipid, and subsided.

"I came up to see, if I could help to take care of the children. Mrs. Flint told me, that she was afraid you had too much to do while she was ill. Oh, there is the little man, that I want to have a little chat with! Come, Tommy, darling; come sit on my knee!"

Tommy was only too happy to do so. He remembered her very well, and, though only six years old, had sat staring at her with his bright blue eyes wide open, from the first instant of her appearance, with a

clever boy's genuine admiration of beauty and grace. One source of his previous disquiet had been, that, having declared before he heard of her arrival, in full nursery-conclave, that, he wouldn't be a good boy, and let all the cross old Abbies in creation be fumbling with his foot, and tickling him half to death, it had become a point of honor and consistency with him not to yield, as it was with her not to let him go below until he had done so; and he had been very much afraid, that he should thus lose his chance of seeing his Aunt Clara. Bubby, alias Dandy, alias Daniel Webster, who, if he resembled his namesake in nothing else, certainly did so in being, as his discerning parent had said, "arbitrary," at the same moment awaking and being "grieved," by finding himself deposited on his back on the bed, instead of in the weary arms of his attached foster-mother, opportunely burst into a full-blown war-whoop; so that Miss Arden had the field to herself.

Slightly glancing at the little white, dangling, blistered foot, she cheerfully said, "Oh, is that all? How glad I am it is no worse! Tommy, did you ever hear the story of a poor little boy, who had to have his foot cut off, because he froze it very badly indeed, and had nobody to take care of it, and bind it up for him?—and he was so brave that he did not scream once, and only groaned three or four times. It is in a very pretty book, that I had when I was a little girl; and if you are a brave boy, too, I think I must give it to you." She told the story very minutely, in a whisper. Tommy's eyes twinkled.

"Now," added she, "I will tell you what we will play. I will be the surgeon, and tie up your foot, and you shall be the courageous little boy; but it will be .

scarcely anything but play; because I don't think I need hurt you in the least. You can tell me if I do."

The experiment succeeded perfectly, Tommy enjoying it more than she did; but just as she set him down with a kiss, and rose, there was a terrible shock and shout in the room below.

Little Betty's good conduct was of an intermittent type. Her quietness and obedience, at the time of Clara's arrival, had been chiefly owing to her pressing secret anxiety lest her sick mother was now about to die, and go to heaven and leave her,—an event with which Abigail was always threatening her, contingent upon her being naughty, and making "a noise to wake up her dear little brother." That theological preceptress further informed her, that if she was always a good little girl, she also would be able to go to heaven; as she would in that case turn into an angel, and have wings given her to fly up into the sky with. Betty's self-knowledge taught her, however, to regard this prospect as not only a distant but an extremely uncertain one, and to think it most prudent to have recourse at once to some other expedients of her own. She therefore, on this eventful morning, persuaded Bridget to assist her in pinning one edge of two clean dish-cloths down each side of the waist of her dress,—a process attended with repeated perforations of her surface, which she endured, though with sundry wriggles, yet with all the fortitude of enterprising genius intent on its ideal. Then, taking the upper corners of the towels opposite to the ones pinned at her shoulders, in each hand, she ran up from the kitchen to view herself in a looking-glass, flapping her artificial pinions like an unfledged chicken.

The invention certainly looked promising. She hoped that it would answer her purpose. She

wished to try it by flying from the window-sill of an unused second-story apartment, adjoining her mother's, into the street ; but the window was fastened ; and she could not reach the bolt. Comforting herself with the reflection that, as the adjustment of the contrivance might not yet be perfect, it would perhaps be better to attempt a shorter flight at first, she next set up two high stools about a yard apart, and endeavoured to spring with arms extended, like a flying-squirrel, from the top of one to that of the other ; when, lo ! she verified the proverb, and came down on her poor little chin, on the edge of the furthest, which upset and fell upon her in its turn. She was hurt, as well as grievously frightened, disappointed, and mortified ; and her loud fall, and shrieks of mental and physical anguish, brought down and up to the scene, in one promiscuous rush, Clara, Abigail, Daniel Webster, Tommy, and Bridget.

Poor Catherine behaved as well as she could ; but she was shivering with terror when they laid the sobbing child beside her ; and Clara pitied her afresh, not for being ill merely, but for being ill in such a Babel ;—could this be by any means a fair specimen of her life ?—She begged her sister's permission to take Tommy and Betty home, to finish the day in Mount-Vernon Street, and leave her to rest and sleep. Tommy caught at the idea, and would not be denied ; but poor little Betty only burrowed with her great head under the pillow ; and no entreaty nor inducement, that Clara had to offer, could obtain from her anything more than a closer nestle to her mother, and the antithetical reply in a half-sob, “ 'Es ; 'tay here.”

A coach was sent for ; as Tommy could not walk. He watched for it, and was in it the moment it stopped

at the door. Clara came to the bed-side with her bonnet on; but poor Catherine clung to her with a lingering hand, as if she could not bear to let so much health and happiness go from her. "When *shall* I see you again?" said she, plaintively.

"Oh, of course, I mean to come to you every day, if possible,—at least, till I see you in your parlor again."

Catherine smiled, and let her go. She was leaving happiness enough behind her now.

It was two o'clock. The air seemed redolent of one omnipresent beef-steak. As she passed the first corner, she saw Mr. Flint hurrying round it with a carnivorous expression; and so did Tommy, as she suspected by his shrinking back out of sight from his window, and holding his tongue for as much as thirty seconds.

She stopped before the shop of the family grocer,—who came bowing and smiling out to receive her commands,—and ordered some fruit and flowers to be sent in her name to Mrs. Flint. Next she drove to a toy-shop, bought a handsome rocking-horse, and ordered it home,—to be ridden there by Tommy, who clamored in vain for a drum,—and a flaxen-haired and blooming wax-doll, with eyes which would shut and open, to serve as a bribe and companion for Betty, the next time she should request the pleasure of her company.

She reached home, feeling like a restored exile, in time to superintend an early dinner for her little guest, and to amuse herself with him for an hour, before Edward came in and she went down to dine. Luckily, Tommy's horse had then just been brought; and she left him delighted with it in the "nursery," still so-called,—a sunny, cheerful room, adjoining her own, where her maid sat at work in the day-time. The girl



was an American, conscientious, intelligent, and, fortunately, particularly fond of children; so that she promised herself much coöperation from her, if it should prove, as she foresaw, expedient to have such visits often repeated.

"Edward," said she, as they luxuriated together as usual, over their dessert, "I want you to do two things for me."

"*Dis donc.*"

"Go to see Catherine Flint,"——

"*Et pourquoi?*"

"She is confined to her bed, poor thing, with a rheumatic cold."

"Certainly. She has called in no one else, I take it."

"No, not yet. Her husband has proposed to call in an electrical practitioner, who owes him some money."

"What Mrs. Malaprop might justly call a *quack*tioner, perhaps."

"Perhaps. At any rate, she does not much like the plan; and if you go in good season to-morrow, before there are any professional *etiquettes* in your way, and pay her a brotherly visit, no one can object."

"It shall be done; and you may rely upon my curing her as quickly as possible. What can be the reason that agreeable people so seldom are sick? Clara, you never are."

"Perhaps I shall be, if you will grant my second request."

"What is that? Do you want me to buy you some candy?"

"I want you to invite Mr. Flint here to dine to-morrow."

You!—what?"

"Want you to invite Mr. Flint here to dine to-morrow."

"Angels and ministers!—Clara, shall I order a hair-shirt and scourge?"

"No."

"Neither shall I invite Mr. Flint here to dine to-morrow."

"Only once."

"Only twice! Why, you could not possibly have seen what he did the last time."

"What do you mean?"

"What I saw."

"I know it could not possibly have been anything worse than *I* saw. Let us compare. Describe your vision."

"Language fails me."

"I will help you."

"I saw—"

"Well, so did I"—

"Him put his knife,"—

"I know. He had just been mashing beans, and eating them with it."—

"When Patrick handed him the squash,"—

"That's it! Into the spoon,"—

"And scoop out the squash, that clave unto it, upon his plate!"

"Exactly!"

"O—o—oh!"

"A—a—ah!"

"And after that, you propose to me to bring him here again!"

"I think we ought once, while his wife is ill."

"Can't he rush into Parker's just as well, distend

himself, and be back again in his counting-room in fifteen minutes?"

"A pretty suggestion for a medical man! Who, do you think, will employ you, sir?"

"You, madam, as you suggested, if your reasonable and tasteful request is granted,—provided I am in a condition to attend to you."

"We will not have any squash."

"We will have nothing. We will keep a solemn fast. It will be of service to his dyspepsia."

"I may ask him, then?"

"At your peril!"

"Thank you. You shall see how nicely I will manage. We will have no dish on his side of the table; and I will tell Patrick that, for that day, I will try not having the vegetables passed round, but letting him take the plates to the dishes, and himself help to whatever is wanted, which stands opposite to Mr. Flint; and you and I, of course, shall dispense the provisions at our ends of the table."

"It will be too late for me. I shall not live to see the second course. He will suck me down in one of his long-drawn sonorous gasps over his soup."

"Ha! ha! ha! How absurd. He will not sit opposite to you."

"He will draw all the smoke down the chimney, then."

"He can sit with his back to the fire.—We won't have any soup."

"Then you will have fish; and he'll chop it up with his steel knife, and eat apple-sauce with it."

"Suppose he does, now.—We shall know better this time than to look at him. Do let him spoil his dinner, if he likes. What does it signify to us?"

"Philanthropy, my dear girl! Philanthropy!"

"He would spoil it just as much anywhere else."

"He would not have so good a dinner to spoil," said the sophist, slyly shifting his ground. "Executions must take place; but one would not therefore wish to hang an excellent person, nor to witness his parting pangs."

"What a tease you are! It is of no use for me to talk to you; it only makes you worse."

"Not usually. Try a different subject."

"I will,—only this I must say first, dear Edward, that I am very sorry to plague you, but in sober earnest I think, that we ought to be kind to the Flints; for you know we never exerted ourselves too much to make poor papa happy; and now the only thing that we can do for him is, to befriend the other members of his family."

After a supplementary frolic with Tommy, Clara sent him safely home, rejoicing over the story-book which she had given him, though begging hard to take his horse, too. She had been glad to have him come, and was now glad again to have him go; and it was with quite a new sense of enjoyment of her usual leisure and freedom, that she welcomed her grown-up friends, Dr. and Mrs. Brodie, and had a merry, sociable evening's chat with them. They were a very well-matched, united, and clever elderly couple, who, after struggling together through a youth of hard work, small means, and six children, had made their way to an easy competence while they were still fresh and vigorous enough to enjoy it heartily, and all the more from its contrast with past privation and anxiety, and from the economical habits, which made it a fortune to them.

The Doctor was as witty as wise; and his stories

of sayings and doings, which he had seen and heard in the course of his practice, kept them much of the time in fits of laughter ; but between them Clara found a chance to make her intended inquiries ; and he readily and eagerly engaged to keep her supplied with objects of charity.

He mentioned to her at once a poor man, formerly an industrious and thriving mechanic, who, after losing his wife and three daughters by a singular series of fatalities, had been seized with incurable paralysis on the burial-day of the last. His savings from his past earnings supplied him with what are commonly called the necessities of life ; but driving gave great relief to the pain which he suffered, as well as to the vacant monotony of his creeping years ; and this he could not afford himself. Clara determined immediately to give an order to the keeper of a livery-stable, to send for him four times a week, at her expense, a suitable vehicle,—an open one, as the Doctor advised, when the weather was fair and mild enough,—with a safe and, if possible, a companionable driver to take him out. It was not very much for her to give. It was so much for him to receive, that three years after, on his death-bed, he spoke of it, almost with his last breath, with tears of gratitude.

“Edward,” said she, that evening, as he returned after accompanying her visitors to the door, “how much money have I to spend?”

“I usually draw three hundred dollars,—don’t you know?—for you, every quarter. Why? Isn’t it enough? Of course, there’s plenty more, if you want it. I am going to the bank to-morrow. How much will you have?”

“Thank you. I believe I have enough now, for the present ; but I meant to ask what my whole income was.”



"Have you waited all this time to find that out? How exactly like you! Clara! Clara! Thank Heaven, that it did not make you an unprotected female."

"Indeed I do. I hope it never will. But my income?"

"O! the same as mine. Twelve thousand a year it was when it was left you, out of which you contribute three thousand five hundred dollars, as I do, annually, for our household expenses. If you mean to turn financier, and want to know exactly how much it is now, you must let me send up Mr. Crockett and his books, and exhibit your business talents and practical turn of mind in a conference with him. He's trustee, and *trusty*. Your principal must have increased somewhat by accumulation; for you have never spent more than half your interest."

"I'm so glad!"

"Little miser! Why? To make some fortune-hunter come after you, and cheat you into believing that he likes you better than I, and that you like him better than me?"

A very pretty blush and smile, and a slight shake of the curls, were the only answer he got; but the answer in Clara's heart was, "Only think how much good it can do!"

She was partly right, and, in her humility, partly wrong. Money is, in itself, almost as likely to do harm as good; while, like all the gifts of Providence, it is pretty sure to do one or the other. Money, however, managed by good sense and good feeling, such as she had been showing within the last few hours, is, if only one means, a very great one, of doing much good to one's neighbour, and more to one's self; and yet, after all, her good sense and good feeling alone had done little less good than her money that day.

Edward lighted their night-lamps with a weary yawn, and said that they had had a tolerable evening, but he was not sorry to have the night come, for the day had been detestable.

"Have you found it so? I am sorry. I believe I have rather enjoyed it."

"Are you so hard-hearted? Haven't you been haunted by the ghost in that chair?" said he, pointing to a large and curious old-fashioned high-backed chair, worked in pale dim colors and odd and fading figures, which had been Herman's mother's, and in which his graceful stripling figure was usually to be seen comfortably lounging, at that time of night. (He had earned for it the name by which it usually went with his brother and sister, the "Ghost's Chair," in his childhood, by melo-dramatically announcing to a nervous guest, "It is some of my great-grandmother's work; and she is a ghost.")

"To tell the truth, no; or, at least, not unpleasantly. I believe that I have thought so continually about Herman's presence, as to have hardly yet become conscious of his absence. There has been a sort of departing sunset-light left shining back from him, that has shown me my way all day long."

Perhaps Clara had read and transmuted with her joyous spirit that sweet, sad verse of Tennyson's:

"His memory long will live alone  
In all our hearts, as mournful light  
That broods above the fallen sun,  
And dwells in heaven half the night."

So it was when he left them again for a longer journey; and there was one who walked in that soft and solemn twilight to her life's end.

## CHAPTER VII.

## THE KNIGHT AND THE BACKWOODSMAN.

“A youth, light-hearted and content,  
I wander through the world;  
Here Arab-like is pitched my tent,  
And straight again is furled.  
Yet oft I dream that once—”

PFIZER, *translated by* LONGFELLOW.

THE first day of Herman's journey, after the bustle and excitement of the first hour of starting, passed but heavily. His weariness returned upon him; and the severed heart-strings ached. The sides of the railroad were heaped up with drifts; and the air was filled with flakes, which the charging winds made such commotion among, that it seemed to him that it was snowing *up* as fast as down, and that there was almost an equal chance, that the storm would end in the flying white feathers' hitching again in the low brooding clouds, and leaving the earth as bare as it was before they fell. The windows were all shut, and dim with the breath of his grimly-contented, suffocation-loving fellow-passengers; he made no attempt to open his; for he thought that if, in circumstances so depressing, they could derive any comfort from the inhalation of their customary carbonic acid, it would be a pity to deprive them of it; and even when he wiped a pane, and tried to divert his thoughts by looking at the shifting views of the ghastly landscape, the provoking steam, which the engine blew from its ever-smoking pipe, kept

clapping its hand over each picture, just as his eye fixed upon it. Last, not least, as he had feared, his otherwise worthy companion proved a prig.

Happily, the latter had laid in a seemingly inexhaustible supply of mental provisions for his journey, in the shape of tracts; pamphlets on teaching children to read right by the ingenious process of spelling wrong, and on other important and practicable kindred reforms; specimens of the "phonetic" alphabet, and of the productions of its patrons; and second-rate treatises, by self-taught, not to say untaught, geniuses, on intemperance, war, slavery, &c.,—a gloomy and depressing kind of literature, chiefly remarkable, perhaps, for its power of bringing the might of pressing social evils into the strongest contrast with that of the means by which it proposes to remove them. He kindly offered some of these to Herman. He accepted one, as an excuse for his unsociable silence. It put him to sleep, and was thus of some service to him; but he dreamed of Constance Aspenwall; and when he awoke, he dreamed of her still.

Day and night he hurried on; but it was still as one in a dream,—a dream of her. He could not help it yet. He glided over Delaware Bay, and with an idle eye watched its flocks of wild ducks, floating on the water like the brown sea-weed of Sea Farm, till the steamboat came too near, and then flying up and away with the silver linings of their wings twinkling in the sun against the evergreen trees on the shore, and wondered whether she had lately watched them so. Delaware and Maryland lay behind,—Maryland where she might even now be, so near him, yet so far from him, so little guessing he was there, caring so little where he was.—The beautiful hills of Virginia closed in around him,

with houses nestling, and sometimes even carefully fitted, into their sides. The mountain-laurels gleamed like emeralds through their coating of thin ice. The hills grew higher and higher; and, where the road cut through them, a rich green matting of thick tufted moss drooped lovingly over, to heal their wounds and hide the scars. Log-cabins began to appear and run by, with *galleries*, thatched roofs, and—alas!—now and then great black holes broken through them; but who would be tasteless enough for a moment, to speak of thrift and comfort in comparison with the picturesque, and with the (very) “peculiar institution,” which is so very promotive of it? Large snaky creepers ran writhing up the trunks of the still leafless trees. The setting sun shone on gilded, filmy, distant mountains and clouds, which one could hardly tell apart; but he passed the highest Alleghanies to his regret in a dark night, without seeing so much as a bear, in a jolting stage-coach with rough-looking men about him; as he found when the morning broke and he beheld them for the first time, nodding waggishly at each other in their uneasy sleep.

They stopped for breakfast, for a few moments, at an inn. Herman determined to avail himself of the opportunity to wash his face. For this purpose he was shown into a spacious apartment containing the convenience of a handsome rose-wood bedstead, and nothing else. The very door had neither latch, lock, bolt, nor *button*, to keep it shut. By earnest and repeated expostulation, he obtained a quart-bowl of water and a napkin, just before the coach started again. On they went once more through the wide dreary tracts of brown and white mountain and wood-land, coming now and then to a clearing, where the snow was unbroken



except by the ebon stumps of felled trees, which looked like the graveyard of the departed lords of the forest.

At Wheeling, Mr. Grubbe pointed out to Herman a fresh novelty. It was a "wharf-boat," a sort of *scow* with a store-house in it, containing for sale, the old man told him, such things as passing steamboats were likely to want, and moored at the shore, or rowed out towards the middle of the river, according to the depth of the water at the time.

They were again embarked, and sliding smoothly down between the brown sepia landscapes on the banks of the Ohio, with the small black mouths of their sub-soil coal mines opening everywhere, like those of the soul-destroying pit. Cairo was passed; and they were stirring with the prow of their steamboat the dingy boiling gruel of the Mississippi.

Here his worthy old friend, having by this time read most of his pamphlets, and distributed many, was much thrown upon Herman's society for entertainment. Herman made the best of it, by drawing from him a little account of his mode of life, and of the savages among whom he passed it. He hinted a little surprise that, at Mr. Grubbe's age, he should not choose to retire from the scenes of his labors, and end his days in ease and comfort. He was only to have a lesson to teach him that tastes are almost as various as men. A well-known dentist declares on the authority of his own experience, that there is such a thing as a taste for dentistry,—on the part of the practitioner, though even he probably would not venture to assert that he ever ascertained its existence on the part of the patient.—

"Well, sir," said Mr. Grubbe, attempting in vain, as he usually did at the commencement of a discourse,

to clear his *bronchitic* voice, an organ without stops, which in its tones resembled an asthmatic watchman's rattle, "May-be it's with bear's meat and buffalo as they say 'tis with human flesh ;—I never tasted none o' that ;—if you eat it once, you'll have to again. After you've got inured to the West, the East's too close and shut-up and crowded for you, and you want elbow-room :

" 'Why, this is freedom ; these pyore skies  
Was never soiled with city sut !'

as our great national poet, Whittier, observes, sir ; though as to that, the Indian's lodges are a great deal suttier than any chimney,—to those under 'em, at any rate. When the wind blows a-puffing down the hole a-top, it seems as if 'twould smoke your very eyes out. But mark my words, my dear young friend, nobody ever got nothing wuth having yet, without suffering some for't ; and I have got the vocabularies complete of twenty Indian dialects !—think of that, sir ;—think of that !"

"Have you, indeed ?" said wicked Herman, with an inward chuckle in the midst of his woe. "How happy it must make you ! How long has it taken you ?"

"Let me see. Stop, sir,—eighteen hunderd twenty-one, twenty-two, twenty-three,—well, about thirty years, sir."

"After all," thought Herman, "his whim is a rarer one, but why is it at all more absurd than that of the moneyed man, who has spent the same time in adding to his ample fortune, by less harmless means, perhaps, some hundreds of thousands of dollars, which neither he nor his neighbours will ever use, but which he must soon leave behind him, to buy very likely the destruction of his idle purse-proud children ? Mr.

Grubbe's Indian dialects will do nobody any harm, at any rate, even if they do nobody any good."

Mr. Grubbe lifted up his voice the while, continuously: "I hope they have not been unprofitable years, sir, to the Injun, any more than to me. (It was his habit to speak always as if there was only one Indian, as it is that of certain other philanthropists to speak as if there was only one slave in the world,—pleasing, illusive idea! Also, he was subject to grammatical inconsistencies and entanglements in his speech, as are most of those who labor under the aforesaid idiosyncrasy.) If he has taught me much, I hope that he has learned something from me in return. According to my poor ability, I have labored, I trust conscientiously, to impart unto him the glad tidings of great joy, sir. It goes to my heart, as I tell 'em, to see so many fine, brave, copper-colored fellers a-going with their horses and feathers and fringes a-rampaging over the purrayra, and to think that it ain't nothing, as you may say, but a great green sieve to let 'em through down into hell-fire, just for want of their knowing what nobody'll take the trouble to come and teach him, and what nobody can find out for themselves; and the wicked trappers going and telling him that our God will love him, sir, if he'll only give them his squaws and horses, and let 'em have his furs reasonable, sir!"

"It does seem hard and discreditable enough," answered Herman, forgetting that he was thinking aloud, "that we should live on near them so lazily, on the very lands which we have taken from them or from their kindred, and do nothing, or worse than nothing, for these poor half-witted children of our Heavenly Father!"

"Half-witted, did you observe, sir? No, they are

not, sir. I beg your pardon. They're *outwitted* sometimes,—more shame to us,—but, if they had as much privileges, they'd be every bit as smart as you or me, sir."

"You have great advantages over most other people in judging of that. I wish I had your familiarity with their languages."

"Well, sir, it is an advantage, especially to the missionary. The interpreter is often good-for-nothing. Why, once, when I fust come out here, a lot of 'em come to me, a-seekin' the way of salvation; and I thought I'd do my best, for want of a better, to make known to 'em some of the plainest doctrines. So I commoonicated with 'em through my interpreter, and told him to tell 'em they must have a new heart. What should he go and do,—as I afterwards found out,—in his partial acquaintance with their dialect, but tell 'em they must git a new gizzard! It's enough to make one weep. Such good souls as they are, too,—some on 'em. They had ought to have good instruction."

"You like them, then," said Herman, absently; "I am glad of that."

"Well, sir, I ask your pardon; but that's just as sensible as if you'd said, 'Do you like white folks?' Some on 'em I do; and some on 'em I don't. I like the good ones, of course; and there's some o' that sort and some o' the other, I expect, to be found everywhere: though the traveller ain't apt to discover it. Why, when I was to Boston, there was a gentleman in company with me one day, that had just been to England; and, says he, 'The Englishman never laughs.' Well, that very same day, a couple of hours afterwards, in a book-store, I took up a book of travels, or letters,

or something, by an Englishman who'd been a-visiting our country; and, says he, 'The American does not laugh.' Well, I take it, the one statement was just about as reliable as the tother. One on 'em had happened to have fell in with sober Englishmen, and the tother with sober Americans; — that was all. The traveller judges according to what he sees, and thinks there ain't nothing but what he doos see. Suppose, now, an Injun sets off to travel to Washington about a treaty; and he goes through Arkansaw, and somebody gives him a bottle of fire-water; and he goes to Kentucky, and somebody points a double revolver at him, and tells him to be off. When he gets back, he'll commoonicate to his tribe, like as not, that the folks in Arkansaw is all kind and friendly, and the Kentuckians miser'ble wretches. If he's a aggravating Injun, he'll get bad treatment everywhere; and then he'll come back and say all the white folks are bad. Now, I'm fearful the white man, when he gits out where we're a-going, is very often very aggravating to the Injun. You can't ascertain—mark my words, sir!—whether religion and civilization's inside of a man, or only outside, till you git him away from his folks. If he's only held up by the pressure of proper ways and people around about him, and the eyes of his neighbours fastened on him, he'll fall flat the minute they're taken off, just as he will hereafter, there's too much reason to anticipate, before the judgment-seat. Why, how many New Englanders out of godly Sabbath-keeping families, do you suppose, sir, carries the Sabbath with 'em when they git, for instance, among the French, who, it's stated, haven't got none of their own? Why, judging from a conversation of a party of 'em, that appeared quite respectable



and consequential people, who'd just come over in the steamship when I was a-stopping to the Bromfield House, I should think none too many, sir. Why, even the young ladies,—and very fine young ladies they seemed to be, too, and conducted with much propriety,—had been, I understood from remarks I heard the young gentlemen make, a-looking on and laughing to places of entertainment to Paris, that no decent pretty-behaved young female had ought to know so much as the name on, sir! Now, if the salt is a-going to lose its savour, every time it comes in contact with anything that isn't salt, where's the use of having it at all, I say; and how is the whole earth ever going to get salted, if even them that is Christians at home is a-going to be Turks in Turkey? They may conduct becomingly enough to Boston, and New York City, and Cincinnati, under the observation of their folks; but, as like as not, the moment they git out alone on the purrayra, with only the great blue eye of God, if I may say so without irreverence, over them, they'll lie to the Injun, and cheat him, or steal his corn or squashes if they have a good chance, or kill his pig or his cow, and leave their consciences to home with their best vests and pants, and take 'em out again, all as good as new, when they git back there. Then, when the Injun finds out what they've been up to, he's indignant naturally, sir; and not being able to get redress any other way, the next time he sees a white man come prowling about, perhaps he'll shoot him; and then we call him a sanguinary tribe, and exterminate him. Very likely. Wa'n't we a sanguinary tribe in seventeen seventy-five, and shouldn't we be again, with the like provocation, sir? Why, I knew a young gentleman, who come out

from the States, a while ago, with the express, avowed purpose, to kill a Injun, sir.”\*

“Infamous!” cried Herman; “but he could not have been in earnest! It must have been mere bravado!”

“No, it was not, sir. I beg your pardon. He purposed it; and he did it too. Now, I am far from taking it upon me to say, that it mayn’t be necessary to shoot the Injun once in a while, in self-defence or after judicial inquiry into one of their outrages; but if the latter, it hadn’t never ought to be done only after a very dispassionate examination. Justice has got two hands, as I say, and had ought to keep one for the white man,—he wants it enough,—and not lay ’em both on the red man; and then she wouldn’t have so much trouble to keep him in order. They’re like childrin—not ‘half-witted childrin’ as you observed, sir, but smart childrin, that air easy put out, and knows when they’re imposed upon, and don’t look on things just as we do, and has to be checked once in a while when they gits too obstreperous, but had ought to be very patiently taught and kindly and forbearingly treated, generally, and protected in all their rights, and always will be by well-principled compassionate individuals.”

The steamboat was just then coasting along one of the two unfathomable, gloomy, trackless, forests that walled the river on each side, with their straight stalks almost branchless to the tops for want of elbow-room, and hung about with gray moss, drooping and trailing

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\* “A young Kentuckian, of the true Kentucky blood, generous, impetuous and a gentleman withal, had come out to the mountains with Russel’s party of California emigrants. One of his chief objects, as he gave out, was to kill an Indian; an exploit which he afterwards succeeded in achieving, much to the jeopardy of ourselves, and others who had to pass through the country of the dead Pawnee’s enraged relatives.”—*The California and Oregon Trail*,” pp. 333-4.

like the dusty ancient cobwebs of the lethargic spiders, slumbering out their century in the undisturbed woods around the palace of the Sleeping Beauty. Five minutes before, a tall and shaggy person had dropped on board from an overhanging cotton-tree. He wore a coat of buffalo-skin, with pistols peeping from the breast, and a knife in the belt; and with the affectionate gripe of a grizzly bear, he hugged a rifle. His head was thatched with a great abundance of straw-colored hair; and a very little yellowish-brown flesh padded the large raw bones of his gaunt face. He had, with the easy affability of one who knows that he can command a welcome, joined our travellers at once, for the benefit of listening to their conversation. He had since occupied his time profitably in a leisurely rumination upon their words and his own quids, and in freeing his utterance from the stores of tobacco which obstructed it. This last he accomplished satisfactorily by ejecting a portion, and packing away the rest in his pouches like a monkey. The deck of his speech being thus cleared for action, he began: "Gosh, stranngers, yer don't mean ter say yer spoony about shootin them thar dog-goned wild Injuns, be yer? Just wait till yer've seen some o' their cussed ways, an yer'll think no more o' that nor o' shootin any other kind o' varmint, 'xcept they ain't so nice to eat."

"I beg your pardon, sir," said Mr. Grubbe, with awful solemnity, "I am acquainted by personal observation with more of their ways than I should expect to learn from you or anybody else, sir; and I should hope and pray, sir, to be very spoony, indeed, as you were pleased to denominate it, sir, about taking away the life or the rights of any of God's creaturs, sir!"

"Parson, strannger?"

"No, I am not, sir; but that is no reason why I should not feel as a Christian man, sir!"

"No harm in that, strannger, sartin; an, if that's all, I don't see as there's anything to hinder my bringin yer round to take a common-sense view o' the subject. 'Life an rights o' God's critters,' says you. Ain't buf-falo and coon God's critters, too; and can't you kill them, when they've got what you're in need on to eat an to wear?"

"Injuns are God's immortal creaturs, sir."

"Be they? How d'yer know?"

"Is it possible you are so benighted, sir?—They have souls, sir."—

"Yes, I'm benighted, I reckon.—How d'yer know that?"

"They have reason and affection, sir."

"Ugh! Precious little on it! For that matter, so has dogs, and twice as much on it, too; and they don't live forever. I swow, I wish they did. I'd try to get a change o' heart for the sake o' seein a little pinter o' mine again the tother side o' Jordan. I'll be durned if that little critter didn't have more sense nor any Christian, an wa'n't fonder o' me nor nobody else since I lost my mam; an that's longer ago nor I can remember of. When he took sick, I lost a week's prime huntin a-nussin on him; an when he licked my hand and stretched out stiff,—I don't mind ownin up to it,—I blarted right out jest like a bossy-calf. The bush turned lonesome, an empty, an ha'nted. I kep seemin to h'ar his racin feet a-comin patterin arter me; and then 'twould seem as if my very throat would ha' busted right up like a steamer-biler, to think o' all his pootty fun, an capers, an frisks, an fawnins round me's bein turned fust into pain, an fright, an

misery, an then into a nasty, stinkin, little lump o' worms an carrion, under the leaves that he'd ha' been so glad to be playin with, when he hadn't done a thing under the sun to be punished for. He was jest as good as good could be, an minded every word I said to him; an I couldn't see why he shouldn't be took up an rewarded jest as much as anybody else; so the very fust camp-meetin I could h'ar on, I jest took a tramp o' forty mile, to ask a parson what chance there was for him; an he said, none, an I'd better forgit trifles, an think o' my soul, an make my peace with God; but I told him, if them was God's ways with innocent critters, I reckoned thar wa'n't no great chance with Him no-how for a sinner like me; an if I did make the peace, I'd be likely to break it, an cuss and swear like the devil, whenever I thought o' poor Tip; so 'twa'n't hardly wuth a while."

"I beg your pardon, sir," interrupted Mr. Grubbe, addressing himself to Herman, "I regret to be obleeged to leave you; but I don't remain no longer in the seat of the scorner. I had hoped, from the turn of your conversation previously, sir, that it wouldn't have been necessary to warn you against evil commoonications; but you're a-beginning to prove what I was a-observing of just now, of the extraordinary effect on weak brethren of a change of sitooation." He rose and left the *guards*.

The backwoodsman pondered an instant, unable to comprehend that any offence could have been given by his frank statement of his own spiritual case; but, as the meaning of Mr. Grubbe's elegant language, and its application to himself, dawned upon him, he sprang to his feet, threw his hand to his belt, and pulled up five or six inches of his seemingly interminable knife. The



white hairs of the retreating old man seemed to reprove him, however; for he paused, and muttered, "Too durned old! Fight, strannger?" continued he, speaking to Herman, who had hitherto sat silent though attentive, "I reckon yer responsible for him?"

"Thank you," said Herman, going on *nonchalantly* with a willow-whistle, which he was making for the child of the steward: "We'll have a fencing-match by-and-by, if you like, if we can find any foils; but it's rather warm at present for anything of that sort, and I would rather sit and talk a little longer first. I was interested in what you were saying about your poor little dog. If I had been present, I should have been disposed, when your parson said there was no chance for it, to ask him, 'How do you know that?' as you did Mr. Grubbe just now."

"I bet *I* did," said the son of the wilderness, first puzzled, then appeased; and the knife sank again into its place.

"What answer did he make you?"

"D—d bosh! I disremember half on it now. But he said that all that critters was fit for was eatin, an drinkin, an sleepin, an fightin;—an that's all that Injuns is;—an in heaven thar wouldn't be none o' that a-goin on, but singing psa'ms an praisin the Lord; an critters wa'n't up to that; an they received thar good things in this world, and thar sufferins wa'n't much, an was the 'xception, too, and not the rule, so they didn't want no compensation."

"I know. I have heard a good deal of that sort of special pleading myself; and I do not relish it much more than you do, especially from clergymen. I am afraid that they are, some of them, much too apt to take it for granted in the first place that a thing is so,

and then to undertake to prove that it ought to be so, when they know neither the fact nor the reasons. People tell us a good many things, I think, in the name of God, that God never told them."

"Is they a heaven for clever brutes, then, do you reckon?"

"It seems to me there are stronger reasons for believing that, than for believing the contrary."

"When ye're a parson, I'll jine yer church."

"Very well; when I am, I shall be glad to get a hearer; and one thing you may be very sure of, that I shall not undertake to serve the God of truth by telling lies nor making false excuses for Him, nor by pretending to know more of His counsels than I do. This matter of the future state of the dead, He has left almost wholly wrapped in mystery. Almost the only thing which he has told us clearly about it is, that good men and women shall be very well off after they leave this world; and bad ones, very badly. Therefore, if you ask me whether the lower animals will live again, I tell you honestly, in the first place, that I do not know; but, in the second, that, as I said, I see a good many reasons to encourage us to hope they will; and I dare say, that there are a great many besides, that I have never thought of. It is of no use for anybody to try to convince you and me, that the domestic animals at least,—the only ones of which I have seen much,—do not suffer, and very often grievously, in their life on earth. They enjoy more than they suffer usually, it is very likely,—as I suspect that human beings do,—but they suffer, notwithstanding, not only in their bodies, but in what you and I should call their souls,—their thoughts and feelings,—perhaps as keenly in proportion to their power of enjoyment as we do; and past pleasure is ne

more a compensation for present pain to them than it would be to us."

"I'm blasted if 'tis! Poor Tippy wouldn't ha' yowled so like murder, an wriggled round on his bed, an tried to stand up on his legs an föller, when he seed me a-goin off to leave him a spell an shoot somethin for us to eat, if he hadn't ha' known by 'xperience what jolly fun 'twas for him to go along an help."

"A female animal, whose young are taken from her, plainly endures the same kind of pain,—I don't say the same degree, of course,—that a woman does at the loss of her child. It is not bodily pain; if it is not spiritual, what is it? Then, the merely bodily agonies of beasts are often such as you and I are not ashamed to confess, that it almost unmans us, not only to witness, but to think of. Some comparative anatomists,—men of science, I mean,—doctors,—are in the habit of inflicting tortures even on poor, harmless, helpless, hopeless dogs, the most nearly human of all our inferior animals, which it would be very hard for a brave Christian man, with heaven in full view, to undergo for the sake of his honor, his country, or his religion."

"Wot! Think if they'd ha' cotched my Tip! Wouldn't I ha' gin 'em!—D'ye ever see one o' the ——— scoundrels at it?"

"Once."

"D'yer gouge him?"

"No."

"Why the ——— didn't yer?"

"Not because I shouldn't have been most happy to put a stop to his proceedings, in some way or other, you may depend upon it; but, as I was saying, animals do suffer in this world, as well as we, for no fault of theirs. God created them as well as us, and gave

them a great love of enjoyment. So far, we are treated alike. He is eager to make more than amends to us in the other world for our undeserved troubles here ; and therefore it seems likely that He is going to do something of the same sort for them,—not to make them happy with our degree of happiness, any more than He does here, but very happy after their own fashion, which consists, in great part, like ours, in the enjoyment of the society of those to whom they are attached. God's own Son said that God fed the birds, and watched over even each particular sparrow. It seems improbable that, after taking care of any creature for several years, He would turn against it on a sudden, and inflict pain or death, or suffer them to be inflicted upon it, (when, as you say, it has done nothing to be punished for,) without intending to comfort and revive it. The longer we take care of anything, the more we love it. One of those good men, in old times, who knew God best, said that He was love itself ; another of them declared that in Him was no variableness nor shadow of turning, and that every good gift came down from Him. Now, the pity which we feel for any innocent loving creature that suffers and dies, is a good feeling,—a good gift,—and must therefore have come down to us from God. Does it seem at all likely that He would have given it all away to us, and kept none for Himself?"

" Can't say as it doos."

" Further, the Bible says that He does not willingly afflict nor grieve the children of men ; therefore it should seem that He would willingly bless and comfort us. When His Son, our Saviour,—who was of course much more like His Father than any other person,—was on earth, he seems to have been what, if he had

been only a man, we might call a sympathizing, kind, obliging man. He used his wonderful power not only to show that he was really God's messenger, which he might have done by severe and terrible miracles, such as calling down fire from heaven on those who displeased him, but to comfort the unhappy, cure the sick, and raise the dead whom the living were crying for."

"I swow, I wish he was back again. I'd see him, or I'd know why; an wouldn't I ax him to comfort me, an raise up that dog! You see, strannger, I'm kinder soft along o'him, I know; but I'm thirty year old, as near as I can guess; an I've been livin alone in the bush or the purrayra all my life pootty much; an he war all the dad, or mam, nor brother, nor child, as ever I had to car' a cuss for me; an, now he's gone, I haint had no heart to git another. I had a friend an a Injun sweetheart once; and they run off together. When I cotched up with 'em, I put a ball or two through him, nat'rally, and she hove herself into the river; so thar was a end o' that. I was a youngster then, an 'twas a hull year afore I could git up my sperits; an for that long, I skulked mostly, an kep out o' everybody else's way. Tip was nothin but a pup, an jest a little spell afore that thar catasterphy, I'd spied him, with his black eyes a-startin out of his head, a-strikin out an fightin like mad with the rapids, whar a pack o' little cusses had soused him in, to look at him drownd. I was so tickled to see his pluck, that I stripped, an dowsed in arter him, an fished him out, an wallopped 'em all round; an he never forgot it; so when I jest went out o' sight and nowhere, like a Will-o'-wisp, he follered arter, an nosed me out. I war beat out, a-layin under a palmetter an dreamin skeery dreams;—I couldn't git shet on 'em them times, so I



didn't snooze no more nor I could help;—an up he come, and roused me out, a-tumblin over me an scourin my face an eyes with his tongue, an squealin for joy. He was right smart of a hunter a-ready, an could allers cotch enough to eat when he wanted; but he was jest as lean as a rail then. The little jackass didn't want nothin else till he'd got me. I had a hard scratch on it; an he was the only livin soul as come a-nigh to me to say, Cheer up. He was sorry for me when nobody else war; an now I can't help bein sorry for him. If them old times was only back, or if I could see the Lord now-a-days, may-be he'd consider the sarcumstances, and do sothin for us."

"You can see him a little while hence, at any rate."

"Wha' say?"

"Before he went up, he left this word behind for anybody who wanted him: 'If any man serve me, let him follow me, and where I am, there shall also my servant be.' If you will serve him, therefore, in this world, you can see him after you leave it."

"S'pose he'd do anythin for sich a miser'ble black-guard?"

"Certainly. He came into the world on purpose to look after and rescue miserable blackguards. But if you want to overtake him, I should advise you to follow him without any more loss of time, and to take care not to step out of his track; for if you once lose it, you may never find it again."

"Blast yer! (This was said, not for anger, but for emphasis;) ax pardon,—but d'yer s'pose I've spent half my days in the bush, not to know as much as that thar? Yer'll find I'm a pootty plaguey d—d good heft to h'ist, I'm afeard; but jest yer put me on his track, if yer can, an cotch me a-losin on it!"

"Leave off swearing then, in the first place," said Herman,—for the first time laying down his work, and raising his gaze to the man's face not so sternly, perhaps, but as firmly and fearlessly as a keeper does, who quells a lion,—“and drinking and brawling.”

There is great power sometimes in a clear soul, looking suddenly through a clear eye. The poor ruffian felt it, and his sank abashed beneath it. “Who's been a-peachin on me, strannger?” said he, confused and hesitating, in a lower tone.

“Your own tongue, your own breath,—excuse me,—and your own knife. Come,” continued Herman, kindly, “you must not mind my knowing it. We are fellow-strugglers with sorrow and sin. I have had my troubles, and thought them pretty heavy ones; but I see now that they were scarcely to be compared with yours; and God only knows how much more severe than mine your temptations may have been. Besides, we are strangers, and may never come in each other's way again unless we meet up there;” and he pointed up into the deep blue sky above them, looking as if he belonged to it. “I hope we shall, one of these days, and that you will be able to tell me, then, that I did something to help you up. You called yourself a miserable blackguard just now, and I thought you did it as if you meant it, like an honest, open-hearted fellow, who wouldn't bely himself, at any rate, for the better or the worse. What then? If you *were* a blackguard yesterday or this morning, is that any reason you should be one this afternoon or to-morrow? Here, I will give you this, to show you your way.” He took out his pocket New Testament, and with his pencil wrote most of the Ten Commandments in printing letters on the fly-leaf. “You can read?”

"I reckon."

"All that we need is, to follow the directions in this little book. The greatest saint, that the angels ever rejoiced over and welcomed in heaven, could do no more than learn and obey them."

"That all? A man might do that much without hurting hisself, I reckon."

"No doubt; if he's a manly, resolute man, and knows how to keep his purpose in sight, and run it down, and how to face the difficulties within and without him, and put them down by main force. Are you that sort of character?"

"I be. I won't say no good o' myself that ain't true, an that ain't much; nor I won't say no bad o' myself that ain't true, an that's a'most every kind o' bad; but when I has a object, I sticks to it; an when I says I'll do a thing, I doos it."

"Good! You'll *do*, then. Will you read this book every day, and ask God, in Christ's name, to help you to understand and obey it?"

"If I don't, I'll be!—I mean I will! Jest read some on it out to a feller fust, will yer?—an'twill spell out the easier for't, may-be, arterwards. My readin's got a bit rusty, I'm afeared. I larned it to the workus, whar I was raised; but I run away jest as soon as I war big enough; an sometimes I been a year or two without seein' a page o' print."

"With pleasure; and you had better *look over me*, if that will help you. I will mark the plainest and most important parts, too, for you, so that you can turn to them easily at any time."

Pointing to the words with his pencil as he slowly pronounced them, Herman began: "'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy

soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind ; and thy neighbour as thyself.”

“That’s a almighty hard un, ain’t it, to start with?”

“Yes, but it makes all the others easy ; and it is not at all disagreeable, either, after you have got into the way of it.”

“Ye’ve got the hang on’t, I reckon ; haint yer?”

“I am trying to do so ; but I find it will take a good deal of time and patience, and a great many prayers, to bring it about. The nearer I get to it, the pleasanter I find it. Love is the most delightful feeling in the world. Didn’t it make you happy to love your poor dog?”

“I reckon. Yer think thar’s a chance for me to have him again, then, if I does it all?”

“How many strange ways God has,” thought Herman, “to lead His lost sheep home to him !” “Indeed I do,” he replied ; “but whether you will or not is for God to say, and not me. Your only chance, your business in the first place, is to serve and follow Christ.”

But was it not wrong in Herman to try to cheat the backwoodsman into being a Christian ? It would have been, very, if he had done so ; but he did not. If he cheated anybody, it was himself. He honestly believed every word that he said upon the subject. He habitually believed every word, which he said upon any subject whatsoever, and refrained from saying anything which he did not believe. It was probably this evident heartiness and good faith on his part, and the remarkable power of adaptation and mental and moral sympathy, which he was already developing, that gave to so many others, wherever he went, so much faith in his

words, and especially in himself, and that gave him from this time forward, more and more, an ascendancy over the minds of the doubting, groping, seeking, and sorrowing, which, to men of a different stamp from himself, seemed altogether marvellous and unaccountable. He was very heterodox, perhaps, on this occasion; but if so, he was so in the excellent company of Bishop Butler.\*

"Injuns ain't neighbours, be they?" exclaimed the proselyte, striking on a spiritual *snag*.

"Certainly; all human beings are. You will want to know, now, how I know that Indians are human; and I could tell you. But it might take a good deal of time; and we shall need all that we have for this book, shall we not?"

"Be I bound not to fight 'em no more, then?"

"I do not say that you are not to defend yourself, if they attack you; but you must by all means do your very best to keep on good terms with them. See here," said Herman; and turning over the leaves, he found and read aloud, "'If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.'"

"Wall, but, strannger, I h'ard a speecher once a-speechifyin; an he said 'twas 'manifest destiny,'—don't that mean it's all right?—for us to drive 'em out, an squat on thar huntin-grounds; and he seemed a larn'd man."

"It is the manifest destiny of the children of the devil to outrage, rob, and murder the ignorant and defenceless; not of the children of God."

"Wall, now, strannger, doctors differ. I was on a boat a spell ago; an thar was the cutest, most interestin

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\* See "Analogy of Religion," Chap. I.



little chap of a seven-year-old, ever I see, a-coming on from Arkansaw to Mizzoura. He'd got a little cow-hide, an he'd crack it around his ears all day long, a-playin overseer. He'd go an hide by the door o' the cook-shop; an every time he cotched the darky cooky a-comin in or out, he'd hit him such a crack on his stumps, as would make him skip like a nanny-goat; an then he'd haw-haw so, you'd hear him all over the steamer, an know what he was about in a second. Then he'd ax everybody to loan him a chaw o' tobacco. He was on'y jest a-larnin; an it made him jest as sick an yellor as death; but gosh, he didn't mind it no more'n nothin, he was so plucky; an he'd choke, an chaw, an chaw, an choke, with his in'ards all up in his swoller, jest like any man. I never saw nothin like it. I thought I'd ha' gin anythin to ha' had him, an brung him up to the bush; an the fust city we stopped to, I stepped into the store, and bought him the poottiest little bowie I could find.

"He had a pootty little book; an says I, 'Jest spout out a bit on't, an let's h'ar yer.' 'Twas all about General Cortes, an Bonyparte, an Walker, an them celebrated heroes; an it said that civilized folks like we are oughter conquer folks as wa'n't so smart an enlightened, an instruct 'em. 'Wall,' says I, 'what d'yer think o' that thar doctrine?' 'Fus-rate,' says he. 'How be yer a-goin to apply it?' says I. Says he, 'When I gits to home, the fust thing, I'll take an conquer away Bubby's garden;—'cause he's on'y a four-year-old, an so stupid he can't raise nothin;—an plant it all with mint for juleps. My, ain't they prime!' 'Wall, but,' says I, 'that's on'y a-conquerin on him. Yer know, arter that, yer've got to l'arn him.' 'I'll l'arn him,' says he, a-cockin his eye at me. 'Yer will,

will yer?' says I. 'What'll yer l'arn him? To make juleps too?' 'Cotch me!' says he, as bluff as a buffalo; 'I'll l'arn him to keep off.' 'That won't do, though,' says I, 'cause he's yer brother; an ye're the biggest, and strongest, an smartest; so yer'd ought ter be good to him an take car on him;' but I thought the book was right enough in general."

"Never mind that book. It was only some man's. This is God's. It is full of directions to us to deal very justly and forbearingly with all men;—as we shall naturally, if we love them;—and, of course, He who made all men, knows best, and has the best right to say, how they ought to be treated. Suppose now a father had six sons, and gave them each some land; and five of them were fine, strong fellows, and always knew what they were about; but the sixth was an idiot?"

"What's that? a nat'ral?"

"Yes. What should you think they would do with him?"

"Wall, I dunno. Wouldn't think thar was much they could do with him, on'y keepin him out o' harm's way,—see that he could git enough to eat an drink, an that nobody didn't impose on him, I s'pose."

"But suppose he was wasteful, and *quick-tempered*, and troublesome?"

"What o' that? He wouldn't know no better."

"What if they robbed him of what his father gave him, or cheated him out of it, and beat and killed him, or drove him away to starve?"

"What then? Why, then I would on'y like to see 'em at it when I was by, the thunderin mean bullies! I'd think thar scalps was a heap too nice night-caps for 'em; an I'd have 'em off, too, if they wa'n't stuck on

an everlastin sight tighter nor most folks's be ! That's all the what !"

"Good ! Your heart is in the right place, I see ; though you must not be cruel even to the cruel. Scalping and gouging are too savage punishments for a Christian man to inflict on the most unchristian of men ; and you must not be too ready to take the law into your own hands. But, now, the next silly, provoking Indian you meet, going along bedizened out in his finery,—or lazy, stupid negro, either,—say to yourself, 'There goes my heavenly Father's poor underwitted son ; and I must see how gently and generously I can bear with his ignorance and folly. If I can, I will do him some good. At any rate, no one shall do him any harm that I can help.'"

"What ! niggers neighbours, too?"

"All men,—black, white, and red."

"Niggers an Injuns be kinder wantin, then, arter all, ain't they?"

"The average of them *are*, at present, I should think, very much below the average of white Americans, in intellect. The difference between them and natural idiots, however, is considerable, I suspect, in this ;—that idiots are ignorant and *shiftless*, chiefly because they can't be taught much, and Indians and negroes, because they haven't been."

"Ax pardon for interruptin on yer. Fiddle away."

Herman read on several pages.

"Seems to me," said his disciple, "God don't say so much about a change o' heart as the parsons doos. Hain't I got to go through that? I'd be glad to git shet on't, if I could. I'm bound to stan' it anyhow without hollerin, as the gals an some o' the fellers doos,

if it did hurt like murder; but they says some folks loses thar wits under the torment, an doesn't never git 'em again."

"I don't recollect, that God anywhere says, that He should wish to alter a heart, which was already full of love to Him, to Christ, and to His other children, and of an earnest wish to serve Him and them. So far as our hearts are not in this state, they need to be changed, no doubt; but we shall be very glad to have them, if we know what is good for us. Has not yours changed a little, this afternoon? Don't you already feel more hope of God's taking pity on you, and more disposition to do good to others, than you did?"

"I reckon."

"Very well. Does that change make you wish to shout, and scream, and go into fits?"

"Wall, no; it's kinder soothin to h'ar o' the Lord's bein my Father, an folks bein my brothers, 'cause I never had none afore; an I allers tho't 'twould be kind o' social if I could.—Hain't I got to have no conviction o' sin?"

"Can we help having it, when we compare our lives with that of Christ?"

"Wall, I dunno. I wouldn't s'pose yer'd never done nothin so very vicious."

Poor Herman! He colored after his boyish fashion. He, to whom it was almost like literal self-dissection to show so much as a glimpse of his inner man to his delicate, tender, sympathizing Clara, to be called upon to shrive himself to this shaggy Faun! The latter misunderstood his reserve, and looked surprised and disappointed.

"Wall," said he after a pause, administering encouragement in his turn, "the best on us miss it some-

times ; an least said is soonest mended. I wouldn't ha' tho't it on yer, but may-be yer was too young to know no better ; an anyhow tain't for me to say nothin ; an thar's time enough afore yer to make up for't."

It served Herman right, and did him good.

"You mistake me! you mistake me!" cried he, raising his fine head, with a face as clear as his conscience, and with all the free glad grace of his happiest moments. "No one can accuse me of any crime, from my infancy to this day. Judged by man's moral laws, I am innocent ; but God's—do not you see it?—are broader. Man says, 'Do nothing that I call evil.' God says, 'Do no evil,' too ; but also, and just as positively, 'Do good.' This I have not done hitherto. That is my sin. I have had friends, knowledge, happiness, and time. I have known that many of my poor brothers in the world were ignorant, friendless, and unhappy ; but yet I have been contented to sit at home at my ease, and keep all my good things to myself, and might have been so all my life, if He had not sent me trouble to take such unworthy contentment away. Was not that selfish, stingy, *mean*? What can our Father think of me?"

"Ye ain't to home now, anyhow. Whar be yer goin to; an what's yer business?"

"To the West, to help some Indians to keep their hunting-grounds."

"He'll forgive yer, I reckon. I would, in His place."

"If I truly repent, He will forgive me that, with my great advantages, I have done so little good. If you truly repent, he will forgive you that, with your great disadvantages, you have done so much evil. But



we have both of us broken His laws. We both need repentance."

"Jest you tell a feller what that thar is, in a common-sense way."

"Repentance? There are different kinds of it. The best kind is what we should wish for, of course; and that is, as I understand it, such a hatred and dread of our past sins as would keep us from ever indulging in them any more, if temptations to them thrust themselves in our way never so invitingly,—such as would make it as impossible for us to wish to indulge in them, as it would be for us to wish to taste the most delicious food in the world, if we knew that it had ratsbane in it. It is a hearty sorrow for having displeased our Father and ill-used our brothers, and gives us such a longing to serve Him and them, that we cannot be easy without doing it. Now, do you think that a raving maniac can serve them to much advantage?"

"I'd full as lieves he wouldn't undertake to sarve me, for one."

"To be sure. A wise man, who wishes to serve them will be scarcely more ready to craze himself with fanaticism than with drink."

The supper-bell rang. Herman would gladly have disregarded it, in order to prolong the conversation; but his new friend sprang to his feet with a presence of mind, which showed that he hungered and thirsted for something else besides righteousness. As he did so, however, he stretched out his huge brown paw for the book, and, touching it gingerly, accommodated it with a nook among the pistols in his furry breast; and this Herman inwardly hailed as a good sign.

At the head of the table sat Mr. Grubbe, indulging in a sulk sanctimonious. The backwoodsman seemed

to have forgotten the grudge he owed him, or else to be disposed to offer it up as a first-fruit, on the altar of his reformation. He handed the old man, in succession, all the viands within the reach of his long arm. Mr. Grubbe made it a point of honor to refuse all refreshment at hands so unholy, and thus soon found himself, to Herman's extreme, though carnal, diversion, reduced to a somewhat ascetic banquet of tea and pickles. The novice fed, notwithstanding, freely and phlegmatically; and then, the sun having meantime gone below, immediately followed its example. Herman availed himself of the opportunity thus afforded to soothe Mr. Grubbe, who, he saw, had something still undigested besides the pickles, which last he thought, by themselves, likely to be quite enough for him at one time. Towards Herman, however, he was rather in sorrow than in anger:

"I could never have believed it of you!—to waste just one and three-quarters of the blessed hours that we've all got to render an account on, by my watch that hasn't lost ten minutes these twenty years, and spend it with a drinker and a swearer!"

"But, my dear sir, I was not drinking nor swearing with him! Did you suppose that I was?"

"Evil commoonications, sir, evil commoonications! How's this earth ever a-goin to be salted, as I say?"

"How, indeed, if the salt,—supposing you do me the honor to believe me to have a grain of it,—is never to be suffered to come in contact, for any purpose, with anything which is not salt? That is not so very ill-intentioned a fellow, after all. He has been reasoning of righteousness, and temperance, and judgment to come, half the afternoon, and gone off to bed with my New Testament in his pocket."

“ You don’t say so ! I want to know ! My dear young friend ! I’ve been a-judging of you ; and I ask your pardon. Why, it’s little short of a miracle ! Do you think it’s genoowine ? Why, he swore so that he made my very hair stand on end ! ”

(Mr. Grubbe’s “ very hair ” was a wig. It was apt to stand on end. Perhaps he chose it on that account,—when his own locks, untimely loosened and uprooted, it may be, by being too frequently called upon to render that token of sympathy with his emotions in view of the depravity of his fellow-men, fell off and forsook him,—thinking it most in keeping with his most habitual frame of mind.)

“ He is trying to leave that off, with remarkable success, I think, for so new a convert. He seems very much in earnest altogether, just now, and a very simple-hearted, open, childlike soul. Nobody can tell how long it may last ; and I am afraid there must be a great many things against him, poor fellow ! But any one who has the gospels in his hand and head has a spar to cling to that will bring him into port, if he will but stick to it, and go where it draws him.”

“ I shall be most happy to render you all the assistance in my power in your work of grace. Shall I converse with him as one under awakening or conviction ? ”

“ Why,—thank you,—I hardly think I need trouble you. I am afraid two spiritual guides at once might be one too many for him, and confuse him.”

“ On the contrary, in the multitude of counsellors there is safety. What method have you pursued with him ? ”

“ Why, a very unmethodical method, I believe it must have been, if any. What one do you find answers best with the Indians ? ”

"Oh, I tell 'em in the first place, of course, you know, that they must git a new heart, and that there's only One above that can give it to 'em?"

"And do they get it?"

"Well, some doos, and some doosn't."

"And when they have got it, what do they do next?"

"Why they leave off drinking, and tobacco, and dancing, and stay in their lodges on Sabbaths."

"Leave off dancing? Why?"

"Because they are God's people, sir. Herodias danced."

"But did not Miriam?"

"That was under the old dispensation."

"But is it possible that you can see any harm in it, —in all kinds of dancing, I mean? Some sorts do not seem, even to me, altogether good, I admit," added Herman, remembering with a thrill of melancholy pleasure, how Constance had appeared to enshrine herself in his mind by her unvarying refusal to join in any, which seemed too rude and too familiar to her coy, retiring, sacred maidenhood.

"Do you call yourself a professor, sir, and ask such a question?" said Mr. Grubbe, indignantly. Never travelling on Sunday, he thought, and rightly, that at one town, where they went to different churches, Herman had stayed to the Communion.

"A professor!" cried Herman, thoroughly puzzled, "no, indeed! Of what? Dancing? I thought you knew that I was a young lawyer, but just admitted to the bar."

"Of religion, sir. Many younger than you have been admitted to the fold; and I thought you had been. Excuse me. I cannot jest on such a subject, sir."

"Neither can I, believe me," said Herman. "I misunderstood you, and now you misunderstand me. Among us at home a professor is only a teacher, properly an academical teacher, of some branch of learning. I never heard the title given before to a communicant, as such."

"I ask your pardon, sir. I was born and bred in New England, as well as yourself; and I have heard it from the cradle up; you must have heard it; but you may have obliviscited."

Herman was waked, as it seemed to him in the middle of the following night, by a noise in his state-room. On opening his eyes, however, he perceived that it was light, and saw the face that the noise belonged to.

"Hope I hain't disturbed yer, strannger; but I reckoned yer might be over-sleepin."

"What's the matter?" cried Herman, simultaneously, starting up in his berth; "boat on a *sawyer*?"

"No, but I be. Here's a gol-durned word,—ax pardon, didn't go fur tur say that thar,—that's got twice as many letters to it as any two words has any business to have; an it won't spell for'ards nor back'ards, nor up *nor* down; nor I can't make no head nor tail on't." Hereupon the book was thrust into Herman's good-humored countenance. He pronounced the word, and sank back again on his pillow with a sleepy sigh. "Tired o' sleepin, strannger? Sun's been up most a hour. Mind tur come out, an have another spell o' readin?"

"Yes, I'll be with you as soon as I can dress," said Herman; and presently again the moments, the boat, and the river, rushed on together towards their end,



while, scarcely marked along the banks, the little regular rows of cotton-trees of two years' growth looked over the heads of the cotton-trees of one, and the cotton-trees of three years' growth over those of two, as, in a republican aristocracy, families of two generations' "respectability," in some rare instances, look down on families of one, and families of three generations' on families of two ; and, scarcely marked, the tiny young leaves began to come out, and thicken through the gray,grim woods with a mist of green; and here and there the lovely red-bud spread its thin,rosy veil of mimic peach-blossoms over the mysterious labyrinthine depths of the trackless, boundless forests ; while still the rough huntsman of the West and the graceful scholar of the East hung together, fellow-students and learners both, over those few wondrous pages, which have power to make the unlearned wise, and the wisest feel himself ignorant; and, hour by hour, they gained upon the spring.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## THE LAND OF SUNSET.

"I venerate the pilgrim's cause,  
Yet for the Indian dare to plead. \* \* \*  
His heraldry is but a broken bow,  
His history, but a tale of wrong and woe ;  
His very name must be a blank."

SPRAGUE.

THE flanking hills were passed. Herman stood at the foot of those mysterious towering walls of rock, which the mythical Great Wolf and Gray Bear pawed up from the plain in their horrid fight, in ages gone before Man came to see and to record ; whose story, if Tradition tries to tell, she can but tell a lie ; whose chronicles Geology can but stammeringly half-spell and half-conjecture from the half-effaced stone hieroglyphics rudely graven there and then by the convulsed uncertain hand of Nature in her throes ; and whose full history we can read only in the other world and from the memories of angels. Before him, at last, stood the Rocky Mountains,—say, rather, the mountains of rock ! Heaped, piled, jumbled, and tumbled together and upon each other, the huddled petrified Titans, their craggy loins girt about with fringy firs and their heads capped with eternal snow, sat, stood, and climbed on one another's shoulders tumultuously, lifting their white, splintered, bristly chins, to beard the calm, clear sky above them, which seemed to answer in the silence, as with the voice of God, "Ye, even ye, shall perish and crumble into dust ; yet I shall endure !"

The caravan began to climb. Herman could not yet. Hastily dismounting and ordering Bernard, his French guide, to wait for him with his horse, he entered one of those dim, weird, and wild ravines, which burrow through the ridges here and there. The sad wind sang and played through it, as if on an *Æolian* harp, the dirges of departed days and hopes,—the wooing hymns of yearnings and aspirations too sweet and high to be foregone,—too vague, perhaps too heavenly, to be ever satisfied on earth. Around him the shady pine-boughs shivered with the startled rustling of the nestling owls that haunted them. At his feet lay, outstretched and still, a black pool, the remains of what had been a height-born torrent. It had danced in light. It had done its work. It had died in darkness. Who had missed or mourned for it? Not one. Far up, and up, and up, through the narrow jagged rent above him, perhaps beyond his power to climb, almost beyond his sight, the lonely misty face of the overhanging mountain looked blankly down upon him, like the pale ghost of human godliness, a little above our common walks and infinitely below heaven.

The solitude, the silence, the chill, the vastness, the everlastingness, benumbed him. He courted it only the more, that perhaps it might benumb his sorrow. He sought to freeze and kill and bury in it the ceaseless pain of his own consciousness. He measured his puny human stature, in thought, with the precipices,—the stunted firs, even,—about him, and strove to teach his chafing mind to say within him, “What matter if this pigmy,—this insect,—suffers in its little day? The pang is scarcely come before it is past. The sigh gives place to the death-rattle, and the breast is breathless. The corpse is dust; the name forgotten. The

mountain stands. The earth rolls round. The universe still marshals on its darting suns and systems. God rejoices. All is well."

Ah, Herman,—in vain! What man ever yet,—self-conscious man!—drew peace and comfort out of thoughts like these? One little human soul is wider, longer, to itself, than space or time. His sorrow came back and looked him in the face, as if with the face of his love, and said, "True, thou art little, and the earth is great; and yet,—behold I show thee a mystery,—the heart of any man is large enough to hold as much as the whole full earth can, of joy or woe for him!"

He heard in the breathless "hush of the air" the hiss of Satan, whispering despair to him; as is his wont when he finds melancholy men alone in desert places. He fell on his knees and prayed; and unseen angels came and ministered unto his fasting spirit; and his faith came back and looked him in the face, as with the face of the Christ yet uncrowned, and said, "Could ye not watch with me one hour? What I do, thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter. Follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be. He that cometh to me shall never hunger."

He came forth again, with a countenance shining as

"Moussa's cheek, when down the mount he trod,  
All glowing from the presence of his God."

Bernard saw the change in him, was surprised, and asked him what he had found. "Peace," he could have answered; but he evaded the inquiry, and, snatching from him the rein of his own shaggy Indian pony, was in the high-peaked saddle in an instant, and preparing to give himself up, heart and soul, to the wild delight of a headlong ride on a worthy steed.

Little Manitou, so-called, was a scion of a wild herd born of the further prairie; and her home-sickness seemed to have got into her head. She ran up the precipices like a squirrel or a fly, leaped the black centre-cleaving chasms like a goat, or braced her little fetlock-fringed hoofs and slid down the steeps like a lama, with a shower of gravel and pebbles of flint, agate, and jasper, at her heels. Her spirits soon infected him; for a generous horse and rider have much sympathy between them. He cheered her on with hand and voice, and, with eyes dancing and his short round curls pulled straight into a jetty halo round his face by the shrewish fingers of the mountain breezes whose haunts he was invading, looked laughingly back over his shoulder at his cowardly Canadian, as, exploding with *patois* and indignation, he toiled after him.

Yet there was not a shade of brutal recklessness in his daring. His high-mettled little steed was sure-footed and sagacious, and knew her ground better than he; and his instinct taught him that he promoted his own safety, as well as his and her pleasure, best, by letting her take her own way and pace, neither fretted nor disconcerted by any interference on his part. She appeared, indeed, to think it a question not worth considering for a moment, whether she kept him on her back or not; but he could trust to himself for that; and, with all her pranks, he observed that she took care to take the very best care of herself. If he did not fear death, neither did he fear life now; and when the wary pony, laying back her ears disapprovingly, halted to consider her ways, and then, with her four feet walking in *Indian-file* one before the other, went mincing and picking her way round the narrow rim of a precipice one or two hundred feet deep, at the base of another



one or two hundred feet high, and gave him time to breathe and think, it was with a flush of hot shame that he remembered a hasty half hope, that had stirred within him in the black night on the Alleghanies, once when the coach had jolted in the rough road more than usual, that it might overturn with him, and dash his troubles out in the valley beneath. How readily do such wishes arise in the thwarted breast of eager, fiery, passionate Youth! How mercifully are they often denied! He was glad already, that his had not been granted. A craven's mood, he felt, was no mood to die in.

"Childish!" he said to himself; "what if the boarding-school is somewhat dreary, uncongenial, and uncomfortable, and its discipline severe and painful? What pupil in his senses would, at his entrance, ask leave to hurry from it, an untutored, unformed, graceless clown, to court? No man ever yet went up to the other world too well-prepared to figure in it by the lessons of a single day. Besides, I have never yet passed a single day, however dreary, that I can recollect, which did not bring its special blessing, if I looked for it. Let me press forward with trust and good hope, then, through the long line of comforts and joys, which the days that yet stand between me and the grave must have in store for me. What if they be many? So, then, will their blessings be."

An alternation of light and darkness seems to be appointed to the soul on earth, as well as to the body. Man can hardly escape it, except by perversely shutting out the light when it rises upon him, and immuring himself in perpetual gloom. This was not Herman's way. He endured the darkness, but always sought the light, and now heartily welcomed the re-

turning cheerfulness, that enabled him to enter with genuine interest into the living epic opening before him.

He drew rein at a point in the pass, which overlooked the plain on the further side. Two huge crags rose just before him on each hand, their peaks spanned by a bridge of leaden clouds with rims of silver, making a frame through which he saw the intense blue of the sky, and the rifts below and beyond him pouring out their Indians into the swarming valley. He studied the wild procession and cavalcade, as it defiled before him, and thought how unreal it all seemed!—how like to some phantasmagorial panorama conjured up by the demons of the mountains, to mock the traveller and work his woe, by forcing him to tell his mates on his return incredible and apparently mendacious or maniac tales!—or how like the fantastic pageantry of those very demons themselves! Who would have believed any accidental wayfarer, who alone, and the first of all his dim-faced brethren, should have lost himself on the unbounded *prairie*, strayed away to westward, and come back to cities and the haunts of common men, with a report of sights like these?

The old brown warriors, looking as if sprung from the old brown desert, paced together, as if “in solemn conference on peace and war, and the affairs of state.” The younger, with their robes of skin merely belted about their waists and their magnificent busts and limbs exposed more than those of circus-riders, lashing their fine horses, went dashing and careering to and fro with wanton and superfluous energy. The pretty young squaws on pretty ponies, all tinsel, fringe, and feathers, paced daintily along, quite unencumbered except with finery. The old and ugly ran, half-clad,

on foot, with the luggage, screaming discordantly, hunting the laden dogs about, and scolding so loud that their voices sometimes reached him, or sometimes made an insignificant part of a load trailed in a *travail*\* at the heels of some other unhappy beast of burden. Herman saw one equipage, composed of, first, a mule, then a *travail*, a squaw in that, a child on her shoulders, and in the child's arms a puppy.

They halted, dismounted, and unloaded. The leathery lodges sprang up, like a circle of mushrooms. Herman moved on, and went down towards them. The men seated themselves luxuriously, each under his own roof-tree,—that is to say, lodge-poles,—with an air of expectation. Some of the engaging females pounced, like Fates, upon some of the fawning dogs, dragged them away from their sports or fights, as the case might be, pounded their skulls and brains together with stone mallets, skinned them, and cut them up. Others made fires, and toasted them over the coals for a tough Homeric banquet.

Bernard proceeded to pitch Herman's tent; and Mr. Grubbe, who was experienced and, with all his love of "the Indian," had his decided prejudices in favor of *Meneaska* housekeeping, took up his quarters, and found much comfort, therein. Herman, on the other hand, had a great fancy to experience a little of the hospitality of his red neighbours, whom he, and the caravan with whom he had hitherto traversed the prairies, had joined only the day before. Mr. Grubbe

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\* "The long poles used in erecting the lodges are carried by the horses, being fastened by the heavier end, two or three on each side, to a rude sort of pack-saddle, while the other end drags on the ground. About a foot behind the horse, a kind of large basket or pannier is suspended between the poles, and firmly lashed in its place."—PARKMAN'S "*Oregon Trail*." This basket is, I believe, called a *travail*.

told him, that he needed only to pass under the buffalo's-hide curtain of one of the lodges, and say that he had come to stay in it, and he might be sure of a lodging, and food and welcome; but that, his cockney prejudices prevented his doing. He walked, however, in the twilight, among the lodges, dark without and bright within; he saw the lurid light of the fires reflected from the leather hangings and leathery faces; he heard the uncouth, unintelligible speech, and the bursts of scarcely less articulate laughter which followed it; and just as, to his regret, he was forced by a traveller's appetite to turn towards his own dwelling, he was invited in by the signs of *Weahwashtay*, (the Good Woman,) to partake, with her husband and children, of a supper of boiled mongrel, which he did very gratefully. Then, going to his tent, he wrapped himself in his buffalo-robes and, with the good rifle *Kill-wolf* for a bedfellow, fell sound asleep, lulled by the rhythmical if not melodious breathing of the worthy *Grubbe*, who was much addicted to sleeping aloud. He was disturbed only pleasantly by the howls of the canine watchmen of the camp, who, by proclaiming in chorus the hours of twelve and three, gave him an opportunity to remember and recognize the singularity of his situation, as his eyes, half unclosing, looked to the unsteady flickering light of the pine-knot, stuck in the ground in the middle of the tent and burnt so low at his second arousing, as scarcely to show the dark figure of *Bernard* asleep across the door. The caravan had, after a very brief halt for supper, pushed on towards the Pacific. He was, but for his two tent-mates, now at last alone among the Indians.

It was broad day before he was broad awake, in the midst of a great stir, bustle, and noise within and with-

out the tent. Springing through the door he beheld, in the clear, sunny morning air, the whole camp in commotion. Horsemen and dogs, in full cry, were hunting each other between and even through the lodges, yelling, kicking, biting, and fighting one another promiscuously; and women, running, scolding, and hiding their favorite children and puppies, and every dangerous weapon which they could lay hands upon; while on one side, a little aloof from the fray, Mr. Grubbe, with the hangings of the tent decorously held together close about his neck, and his popped-out head embellished with a tasselled night-cap of conical form, was proclaiming "peace principles" in a most stentorian and indignant voice; and on the other, nine old women stood in a row before a blasted fir, and sang, to allay the rage of the combatants, a *medicine-song*, which to Herman's uninstructed ear seemed rather more adapted to excite it. Perhaps, however, the proceeding was founded on the homœopathic theory,—that which would have a tendency to excite a disorder in a sound subject being expected to allay it in any already affected by it. If so, homœopathy, on this one occasion at least, came off victorious. The white-faced halcyon grew black-faced in vain, and ceased from his exhortation in dudgeon; the red-faced ones carried the day.

As soon as Herman was dressed, he went out again to inquire into the cause of the tumult. He discovered, that the War-Eagle had informed the Rattle-Snake, that he could kill more buffaloes in one sunshine than the latter could in a moon. Thereupon the crested Rattle-Snake, as in honor bound, had snapped his fingers in the plummy War-Eagle's face. Whereupon the War-Eagle, with his finger and thumb, opprobriously



tweaked the Rattle-Snake's nose. And upon that, all the valiant retainers of both had rushed to blows, in a manner greatly to the credit of all parties, and would inevitably have left of one another nothing but the scalps and the squaws, had not the mighty and terrible medicine-woman, AhkayEEPixen, (the striker of many,) in her official robe of white mountain goat-skin, wrought with wolves' and owls' claws, and her tunic of buffalo calf's hide, begun a dreadful chant, which, if they had waited for her to finish it before they stopped fighting, would inevitably have brought down upon them the great invisible bird of Thunder, to stun them with the flap of his wings, and burn them all up with the flash of his eye.

As Herman was extremely impatient to hear a little of the Indian eloquence, about which he had heard so much, he had no sooner finished his own breakfast, than he invited the warriors to a bountiful lunch of reconciliation, at which he gratified them with molasses and water, biscuits, and a sheet of sweetened chocolate; after which they gratified him pretty nearly as follows, (Mr. Grubbe having gone to walk, and Bernard therefore serving as interpreter:)

Swarthy Chieftain, seated on his heels.—“Snort, splutter, sputter; gibberish, gibberish!”

Bernard. “He say he make you his—what you call?—gratitudes, for coming so far from de graves of your grandpapas' osses, to bring him good cake and sweet drink.”

Herman. “He's very welcome. I only wish there was more.”

Bernard. “Ah she to he shee; um cumps.”

Swarthy Chieftain. “Hoogh! En achemish. Hipsh wais. Ta rachatoo cachatoo.”

Bernard. "He say he cram so much already, he ready to burst; and so as full is his belly of grub, so is his mous of sank, and his heart wis affection."

Herman. "Tell him his talk delights me, as much as my grub does him."

Bernard. "Emim itoo tumtine."

Chieftain. "En amacus. Emim sextua; en sextua."

Bernard. "You his friend; he yours."

Herman. "Much obliged to him,—so I am. Set some of the others to talking. Tell that one with the *queue* of long feathers in his hair to speak up, and let me hear what he has to say for himself. Ask him where the rain comes from."

Bernard. "*Sacre!* I tell you as much as dat me-self, by gar! Clouds is just like your sponge dere. Dey gits full of water fust; and den dey swells up all big, till dey fills up all de sky, so dat dey squeezes each anoder. Den out comes de water, of course, till it's all gone; and den zey is small again, so dat you no see 'em."

Herman. "Thank you. Your theory pleases me; but I wish to have his to compare with it. You will ask him."

Bernard. "Em, hemakis meohot, etu ke inese wykit?"

Chieftain, confidently. "Hemakis Tota aha hohum hatta, &c."

Bernard. "He say dat de sky is de floor of ze Great Totem's lodge. By and by, de stars pricks it all full of *trous*,—what you call holes.—Den he cry. Tears drop down t'rough de holes. Dat's de rain. *L'ignorant! Les Gray-Buffalo sont toujours si bêtes!*"

Thus the conference continued, while the pipe of tobacco and *shong-sasha*, (the bark of the red-willow),

went the rounds, whiff by whiff, through the party, for one or two hours. In the course of that time, Herman was frequently

“Too inly moved for utterance,”

though not usually to tears. But if he laughed, it was only in the, luckily, capacious sleeves of his hunting-coat. He succeeded in concealing his emotions with a Spartan dignity so equal to that of his guests that, when the *convivium* broke up, he was the most popular man in the encampment, and found it expedient henceforth to be out of the way when there was any eating and drinking going on within the lodges, or else to keep his appetite in readiness by taking no meals within his own tent; so many were the invitations,—which it would have been as uncivil to decline among them as an invitation to take wine among us,—poured in upon him at all hours, to partake of puppy, bitter roots, dried-currants stirred into warm bear’s-grease, pemmican, old dried fish, and gritty messes of choke-cherries pounded up whole, stones and all. He was glad to throw off the acceptance of this branch of hospitality as much as possible upon Mr. Grubbe, to whose seasoned stomach and really excellent heart nothing came much amiss from his savage pets.

It is saying a great deal to say, that even Herman’s beads, tobacco, and chocolate, made him more popular among them than this good old man; for the mutual attachment between the latter, amidst the general hostility between their races, was really something beautiful to see. They appeared to regard him with somewhat of superstitious veneration, and somewhat of compassion, as a being wise as to the other world, and foolish as to this; respected and protected him, brought him botanical specimens collected at random,

ducked him when in his near-sightedness he stumbled upon wild bees' nests, found his spectacles when he had laid them down upon the mountains and forgotten to take them up again, listened with courtesy, if not complete conviction, to his attempts to impart to them religious instruction, and cherished him generally. On his side, *mal à-propos* as he often was with the rest of the world, towards them affection taught him tact, and he was not only forbearing and forgiving, but considerate, usually, and strictly observant of their rules of punctilio and *etiquette*.

Good feeling may often practically more than fill the place of good sense. Can any amount of abstract good sense fill the place of good feeling? Herman thought that he had never fully perceived, how truly the sentiments which others entertain for us are apt to be, *in the long run*, the echo of those which we entertain for them, until he witnessed the intercourse between these often ferocious and so-called unmanageable savages, and their fond but in some respects very foolish old friend. If, as a recent traveller has asserted, "no man is a philanthropist on the prairie," it is very sad to think how terrible an accumulation of ill-will and alienation must have been, in all probability, wrought by the hosts of ungoverned white men perpetually trooping, for years past, over their desert domain, in these tribes of undisciplined and passionate red brethren of ours, whose code of honor seems to exact the return of wrong for wrong as rigidly as that of any *Christian* duellist.\*

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"They [the Indians] have been heretofore left comparatively unprotected from violence and wrong, inflicted by unprincipled white men. \* \* \* By such men, unworthy of the name, they are often cruelly beaten when unprotected, and not unfrequently shot down in mere wantonness. The bloody revenge that almost certainly follows,

Mr. Grubbe was born with a love of adventure, which was much developed and colored by the perusal at odd minutes of an odd volume of the curious and kindly narrative of Lewis and Clark's peaceful early exploring expedition among the Indians of the West. It was given him,—the other volume being lost,—by the wife of a shoemaker to whom he was apprenticed, as a reward for his kindness in drawing about a sick child of hers, in a little wagon, out of working hours. He dreamed of it by night, and longed by day, as he patiently drudged over his last and lap-board, for the time when he should be free, and able to go out with his knapsack on his shoulder, and verify all the wild story for himself. That time was long in coming. His father died; his brother was a sot; his sisters were many; his mother was poor. It came at last, however. He earned and saved enough to portion and provide for them all, and set forth with an easy conscience and thankful heart, to refresh himself with the contemplation in others of the free, fresh life, the spirits and spontaneousness, which monotonous, hard, and sedentary toil, hope deferred, and advancing age, had forever driven out of him. Of this refreshment he was never weary, nor of those who afforded it to him.

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becomes the general theme, unaccompanied by the circumstances of cruel provocation which gave it birth. A border warfare springs up between the pioneer settlers, (who are really trespassers on their lands,) and the tribes; and the strong arm of the Government being invoked for their protection, wars take place, which are carried on at much expense, and at the cost of many valuable lives, retarding the progress of our people, by rendering the condition of the settler insecure, and closing, perhaps, with the annihilation of almost entire tribes. This process of the destruction of a people of whom Providence has given us the guardianship, originating in such causes, is unworthy of the civilization of the age in which we live, and revolting to every sentiment of humanity."

[*Report of the Secretary of the Interior for the year 1856.*



Herman, too, felt as if he could never have too much of it. It was an anodyne, if not an antidote, to the pain still lurking at his heart ; and young yet, uncrushed, and *uncrushable*, he threw himself into it heart and soul, sitting by night among the chiefs while the pipe, and the story which he soon began to learn rapidly to understand, went round the fire, and, by day, sketching their picturesque, symmetrical, faultless forms, decked in their best for the purpose in all their barbaric pomp of skins, fringes, beads, and plumes, or as they sat proudly, half-stripped for the course, upon their pawing horses, or climbing by himself to catch the likenesses of the wild mountains in every variety of their frowning, sullen, or smiling expression, or, above all, after they recrossed the mountains, as they did in a day or two, rushing on his own foaming little steed, like a spirit of the storm, through the break-neck buffalo-hunts, with a dim whisking of tails and up-and-down tilting of shaggy haunches before him, and clouds of dust and a thunder of hoofs all around.

It was not the most prudent pastime in the world ; for the plains were riddled everywhere with the burrows of the prairie-dogs and their tenants, the rattlesnakes. Let Little Manitou once put her little hoof into one of these pit-falls, and down she must go with a broken leg, and Mr. Herman Arden with a broken neck, or if with any slighter injury, to receive his quietus at the hands (*i. e.*, hoofs and horns) of some attentive and considerate old buffalo. But boys will be boys ; (oh, that they would never be anything worse !) and there are two merciful provisions of fate with regard to them : one, that their mothers and sisters can't see all they do ; and another, that a man laboring under the intoxication of youth is like a man intoxicated

with liquor,—it often takes an uncommon deal to kill him. As for Little Manitou herself, she liked the fun so well,—so much better than life,—judging from the indiscreet and altogether headstrong and headlong manner in which she conducted herself, that Herman had no scruples about the humanity of it on her account. His own danger, boy-like, he hardly happened to recognize. He was sorry for the buffaloes; but it was a consolation to him, and let us hope to them, to reflect that he never shot any of them, except when his larder was positively in want of beef, and that, as they were doomed to be hunted at any rate, it could make very little difference to them whether twenty-nine horsemen only were at their heels, or thirty.

Next best to hunting them, he loved to creep on his hands and knees among them, when they fed or lay upon the grass with their huge, grim strength mild and at rest, to lie and muse, and try to forget, in a fantastic sympathy with them, that he had ever known, any more than they, a regret for the past or an anxiety for the future; till, all at once, some unwieldy monster of them would roll over, toss his hoofs in the air, rub and scrape his leathery back on the sharp stones, in a rapture of uncouth comfort, and then, scrambling up upon his fore-legs and squatting on his haunches like a dog, with his mane full of dust over his browsy forehead, would fix on his visiter a look of grave, grotesque, complacent inquiry, like an old fop powdering himself, turning round, and saying, “What do you think of me now?”

In fact, revelling, as Herman did, like a genuine lover of nature, in the contemplation of the harmless, amusing animal life,—so in keeping with the whole scene,—about him, the wanton destruction of it was a

grievance to him. It was not merely that the Indian patriarchs killed rather more beasts and birds than they wanted for food, dress, and shelter ; nor that their naughty little boys were, morning, noon, and night, straying with their miniature bows and spears over the plains, and piercing, pricking, cutting, and crushing every hapless little creature they could find harmless enough to be tortured with impunity, while their parents admired their exploits as a cat does those of her kitten, mumbling, scratching, growling, and nosing over its first mouse. Even the—in all other respects—best-behaved of the white men, with whom from time to time he fell in on the prairies, seemed inspired, in the view of the sublimity and beauty around them, only with the enthusiasm of the veteran butcher, who is reported to have held the following colloquy with a certain appreciative matron :

“Miss So-and-so, what a splendid night ’twas, night afore last ! D’ye mind ?”

“I remember, General Brisket, it was a remarkably beautiful night.”

“Oh, ’twas real heavenly. I see the moon shine into the winder o’ one side an out o’ the looking-glass o’ tother ; an I laid an laid, and tumbled an tossed ; an at last says I, ‘Miss Brisket,’ says I, ‘I can’t stand this here no longer !’ says I, ‘I shall have to git right up, an go to slarterin.’”

But the chief offender in this slaughter of the innocents was Herman’s self-constituted particular friend and squire, Whattaraskle, the Good-Woman’s very bad boy. He was an incorrigible—or, at any rate, uncorrected—little varlet of fifteen, handsome, slender, light, and fleet as the celebrated Mercury, blown up by a Zephyr. He was to the full as light-fingered and mis-

chievous as any Mercury whatsoever could be, and likewise was blown-up, so to speak, by everybody excepting his mamma, whose credit alone saved him from well-merited chastisement at every turn.

Weahwashtay regarded him as "great medicine," which he certainly was, if being a dose could make him so, and would neither punish him herself nor let any one else; for, on one occasion, when he, an imp of five or six years old, was alone with her on the prairie, they were pursued by the Demon of Fire, who probably wanted to claim his own. Whattaraskle, at the same time, was pursuing a butterfly, to the right and left, and forward and backward. Every time his anxious parent caught him to carry him off, he kicked and thumped her, and steadily retarded her progress by this ingenious means till she set him down again, which she was at last compelled to do once for all, not merely by physical anguish, but by the hot approach and breath of the rushing flames, and the recollection of the poor little yearling papoose, who must already be wriggling and crying for her in its furry cradle at home. With the tenderness of a lioness, and the presence of mind of a princess, she therefore knocked her offspring down, set her well-knit knee on his shoulders, tied his feet with one of her flying locks, which she twitched out by the roots for the purpose, threw on the ground her mantle of buffalo-skin, rolled him over and over in it, with the brown outside outwards, till he looked like a *charledonier*, (I spell it by ear,) darted off unencumbered, with the foot of an antelope yet none too fleetly, for her life, and left him to take his chance. When the fire had burned itself to death, the young chief was found, sound asleep and quite unharmed, in the singed hide on the only green spot in

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the black prairie. His escape was looked upon as miraculous.

He took a great fancy, not altogether reciprocated, to Herman, from the time he first tasted his chocolate and biscuits, lay across the opening of his tent, watched all his movements, jumped up and ran after him when he went out, like a dog, broke his pencils, fingered his drawings, tore his papers, and made his own countenance frightful with his paints like a monkey, secreted his little valuables like a magpie, howled at his ear when he wanted to go to sleep like a wolf, and, in short, in spite of coaxing and cuffs from Herman and Bernard, persisted in conducting himself like a whole *menagerie*. But the head and front of his offending was, that he could never see any living thing stir,—bird, beast, or reptile,—without frightening, hurting, or killing it. Herman might spend hours in stealing unawares upon a herd of shy wild animals,—sheep, goats, or antelopes,—and just as one or two of them had been obliging enough to group themselves prettily, and his portfolio had been softly and stealthily opened, that neither sight nor sound might give the slightest intimation to the shy, coy darlings, that they were sitting for their pictures, out would leap the dark imp into the midst of them, shouting and clapping his hands;—or, worse still, out would leap an arrow from his unseen bow, to lay the fairest sobbing and bleeding upon the grass, and sweep her sisters away, as if on the wings of the wind. This was intolerable; and so Herman told Mr. Grubbe; and so Mr. Grubbe told Weahwashtay; and so Weahwashtay told Whattaraskle; but not to much purpose. While she scolded him at one end of the lodge, he was out at the other; and before he had done, he very nearly got



himself into a very serious predicament, and Herman too.

The latter, determined to make a very serious impression upon Whattaraskle's mind, and, if possible, to enjoy one afternoon's ramble and sketching in peace, had, with the mournful concurrence of Weahwashtay and amidst a chorus of approving laughter from the other nobles, forcibly ejected that offending youth from his tent, while he held a high coffee-feast there one evening. On the following day, he promised the boy a whole string of large carrot-colored beads, of inexpressible beauty and inestimable value, if he would bring him the flower of a certain plant, which Herman had his reasons for supposing to be out of blossom. Failing to find it earlier, he was to continue his solitary search till sunset, when, if he did so, the beads were to be his at all events. If, on the other hand, he let Herman hear or see anything of him, before that time, without his flower, he was to forfeit his reward. These conditions agreed upon, Herman waited only to see the stripling set off with zeal and speed up the mountains, and to deposit the beads in the hands of Mr. Grubbe, to be given, if earned, in his absence, before he set off himself in another direction, with speed scarcely less and zeal even greater. Climbing diagonally and then going horizontally, he found a satisfactory spot half-way up his mountain, with a dizzy precipice below, and a snow-roofed summit above reminding him pathetically of wedding-cake, and just above that, one glassy icy peak, looking loftily down over it through an up-and-down floored gorge, tapestried, where it opened near him, with green quivering pine-boughs. The day, the lights, the shadows, the clouds overhead, the mists underneath, the silence, the

solitude,—the scene, was, in short, perfect. He placed his portfolio on a raised tablet of black rock, that looked like the unintelligible tombstone of dead ages, and himself on another, and sketched, and gazed, and dreamed, he knew not how long.

All at once, there was a rushing and crashing in the gorge. A slight dark form was darting towards him with every sinew strained. It was that of the ubiquitous Whattaraskle; and behind it for an instant appeared a rampant, shaggy, fur-clad figure surmounted by, as it seemed to Herman's remarkably keen sight, a positively demoniac face. It stooped out of view, appeared again much nearer, stood up once more on its hind-legs full seven or eight feet high, as if to take an observation, and again came scrambling and tumbling on, on all-fours. It was the gigantic "Caleb," as some of his familiar acquaintance call the grizzly bear. The little fugitive, no doubt, must needs have been bearding him in his headquarters. The precipice was below. He could not run much further without running from the jaws of one death into those of another. His strength was almost spent. His speed was slackening; his adversary's increasing. He was in a fair way to get immediately just what he deserved; but still it was not pleasant to see his poor mouth foaming, and his tongue and eyes starting from his sharpened face, after that fashion; and thus it happened that, the next time the justly incensed Caleb tilted himself back on his hind-legs, with his bristly muzzle all snarls and white teeth, and eyes full of mischief, he saw close before him not a young Indian's back, but the front of a young white man, with his feet firmly planted in a portfolio, two teeth as white as Caleb's own compressing his bristly under-lip, eyes that sparkled as if the bad example of

Caleb's had been too much for them and they meant mischief, too, and, aimed precisely at Caleb's red, steaming, open mouth, a rifle that instantly went off with a crack, a whiz, and a bullet, which must have affected Caleb's brain very seriously, had he not just at the right moment shaken his head disapprovingly at it, as if he had thoroughly studied the whole subject of duelling, and really could not consent to give it his countenance. Pawing the smoke out of his red eyes, he came on again; and the rifle was unloaded, the knife too short, the solitude around, the precipice below, and death, in the shape of Caleb, staring Herman in the face; when, "on the very verge of fate," his good genius reminding him of his ruffianly accomplishments, he threw himself into a scientific attitude, clutched his rifle with both hands, and encompassed himself with a whirring whirl of passes, in hopes of scaring the monster away. Caleb did not appear at all dismayed, but, on the contrary, rather gratified, and approached to embrace him, when, to his chagrin and astonishment, he received a broken paw. He stopped to mouth, fondle, and condole with it, just long enough for Herman to dart twenty paces backwards, and up into a stunted half-naked fir-tree rooted in the thin, slanting soil, six feet or thereabouts above the brink of the precipice. Whattaraskle was already perched in it, and unconscious of anything but terror, tried to push Herman off. But a smart rap on the knuckles, from the rifle which the latter still held fast, warned him that he might trespass too far upon his forbearance. Driving him higher into the tree on the safe side, and taking up his own position on the lower branch, which ran off horizontally at the height of about eighteen feet, Herman began in all haste to re-

load ; but before he could accomplish this, the bear was climbing the trunk as fast as his three legs could carry him. Herman laid his body loosely along the limb of the tree, twining three of his own limbs around it, out of harm's way, drew his hunting-knife, and, as soon as Caleb came within his reach at arm's length, darted head-downwards at him, struck him in one eye, and, quick as a snake, drew himself up again. The bear stopped climbing, but clung. With his weight, the roots cracked ; the tree shuddered. He must fall, or all go down, down, down, together. Repeating the manœuvre, as instantaneously as before, Herman stabbed him in the other eye. He dropped, rolling, roaring, and struggling, on the pebbly gravel at the root of the tree, and they after, while with the three-fold jerk the fir reeled, swung, toppled slowly over, and hung roots uppermost and branches out of sight.

Herman reloaded six times, and shot no less than six bullets through poor Caleb's brain and lungs before his troubles were over ; and then, that which is a matter of conjecture to most of us, namely, how death would seem to us if we knew that we were, in all probability, just about to die, could never be again a matter of conjecture to Herman. He knew.

How had it seemed ? Like "only an incident in life." But did he not kneel down and thank his Maker for his preservation ? Undoubtedly ; not, though, that he had any particular preference for living in this world in those days, but because he saw that it was God's will that he should live, and was therefore content and glad to do it ; and because, when he had time to think, he did not love to think how, if his adventure had had a different ending, Clara would have cried in his far-away home, while the mountain eagles

were picking his bones in these their fastnesses. But first of all,—must I tell the whole story? He was a whimsical fellow, and, as I have said, not perfect.—Before he did anything else, he rolled on his back, screaming with fun at the idea of having come off victorious at *double-stick* with a bear. He cut out and pocketed for trophies his victim's twenty claws, which were all of them between four and five inches in length. Then, with Whattaraskle's assistance, he rolled and shoved him over the broken edge of the plumb descent, thinking that a little pounding might make him tenderer, and that at any rate it would be convenient to let him travel homewards of his own motion as far as he could; for he must have weighed between two and three hundred pounds. To the foot of the precipice, Herman, on his return to the camp, sent up a detachment of his most trust-worthy friends, under Whattaraskle's guidance, to get the dear remains. He was, though quite unhurt, for once in his life completely tired out, and sore and strained in every muscle from his fight, and made no attempt to accompany them. They satisfied themselves with devouring raw, on the spot, only a portion of the more tempting entrails and marrow, and faithfully brought him home flesh enough to enable him to entertain them meetly at solemn festivals on several succeeding days.

Whattaraskle, having regained his wits, was not ungrateful. He did not cease to be mischievous; for then he must have ceased to be;—all the mischief subtracted, he must have become a mere cipher.—But the next day, when his deliverer, on a ramble to see again the scene of his adventure, unwittingly sprang into the baked clay bed of one of the innocent-looking, dry-on-the-top, bottomless-fluid-underneath quicksands, or rather quick-



puddles, of the Rocky Mountains, and was sucked down helplessly up to his knees, and up to his hips, and up to his chin, and up to his nose, Whattaraskle, beholding, not only with infinite presence of mind emitted yells such as only an Indian can utter, but whisked up an oak fast by, scrambled along an over-hanging branch, hung from it at full length by his hands, and gave Herman both his feet to hold on by till help came, and did not once flinch nor complain, though it was a full quarter of an hour in coming, and, in the course of that time, his arms were pulled nearly out of their sockets; had it not been for which merciful intervention, my pleasing tale would have wanted a hero; all the interesting incidents wherewith I am about to delight my readers in my ensuing chapters would never have happened to him: and he would probably have been at this time still sinking and sinking through the earth, and destined eventually, (if gravity does not forbid the idea,) to reappear in the shape of a very remarkable fossil at the antipodes.

Nor was the Good Woman inferior in gratitude to her bad son. She could not, indeed, refrain from coaxing away all of the bear's claws but two to ornament a necklace for her husband, from Herman, who she saw was, from a defective education, incapable of appreciating in any just degree their beauty and worth; but, not satisfied with preparing the bear's skin with the auburn hair on, so nicely for him, that he slept under it every cold night for years after, she, wishing to provide for him a pleasant surprise, managed to abstract from his tent his only extant pair of civilized boots, steeped them in the animal's grease to soften the leather, and wrought them thickly with dyed porcupine's quills, after which they were, though unctuous,

impervious to the wet. She also, to his great joy, obtained for the kind "Méneaska," from her husband, an invitation to take up his quarters at his lodge.

Herman did so immediately, and by bringing, as Mr. Grubbe advised, his own clean rugs and wrappings with him, made himself comfortable enough, and would have been more so, if his host's *totem* had not previously solemnly enjoined it upon him in a dream, if ever he passed a night with a white man to hop twice or thrice like a frog to and fro across his pillow at midnight. Herman was first made aware of this rite rather roughly, by being awakened at the proper time by a smart fillip from the Chieftain's toe, in his nose, which felt at the moment as if it must be nearly torn off; but the agile Taiquinsuwatish improved by practice, and no serious accident of the kind occurred again, though his guest was sorry that he should be put to so much trouble on his account.

Not many nights after, when Herman and Whattaraskle, having taken an unusually long ramble and scramble, had gone to bed early, leaving Taiquinsuwatish still out at a gambling entertainment, and Weahwashtay, his wife, rocking herself to and fro on a buffalo-skin before the fire, and soothing to sleep her youngest papoose, who was ill, Herman was awakened by hearing a deep, hollow voice at the door say :

"Weahwashtay?"

"Eshe ke? (Who is it?)"

"Umpqua."

With a wild cry of joy she started up, rolling the baby off her knees upon the shaggy hide, and clasped her arms around the neck of a tall, tottering, advancing figure of a man, clad in a single squalid mantle of worn-out fur, through whose rents his meagre ribs could be

seen. He wavered and faltered, as if blinded by the dazzling fire-light; but throwing back her head to look at him, she dragged him forwards to it.

"Oh, Umpqua, where are your beautiful robes?"

"Gone."

"Your warriors?"

"Gone."

"Papooses?—squaws?"—

"Gone. All gone."

She beat her breast, and cried with a long wail, "Gone, Umpqua, gone!—all?—Gone how? Gone where?"

"The bad Bostons!"\* groaned out the poor man, with an accent of indignant, appealing agony, impossible to describe. "The bad Bostons!" he repeated, as if no other words could express the full depth and extent of his wrongs and wretchedness.

"Umpqua sit! Umpqua eat! Umpqua lie!" cried she, bursting into a perfect storm and whirlwind of tears and cries of wrath and pity, and seizing, all in the same instant, on him and on food and clothing for him.

"Eat? No. Drink? No. Live? No!" replied he, in a calmer tone. "I seek not,—a beggar,—my kindred, to live, but to die. Who sleeps there with no welcome for me? Taiquinsuwatish?"

"Meneaska."

His voice changed from despair to fury.

"What, he sleeps warm in your lodge, while, driven out, I wander by night, in dark, cold, rags, and famine!"

He caught up a spear and sprang madly forward,

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\* The name given, it is said, by the Indians of Oregon, to those who volunteered to destroy them.

trailing along the ground Weahwashtay, who clung to his waist, shrieking for help and crying, "Oh, strike him not, Umpqua! He good! He armed! Meneaska, have pity! He mad! He my brother!" For Herman, starting up on one knee and cocking and presenting his loaded rifle, had brought the stranger to bay.

They looked one another in the face thus for a moment; and then Umpqua, apparently impatient of delay, and surprised that Herman did not pull the trigger on which his finger rested, dropped his spear, bared his breast and, proudly throwing back his head, exclaimed, "Fire! Finish! Why not? Fear not! I fear not!"

"Why should I wish to kill you, or you to kill me?" said Herman. "I am a friend to the Indians, and a friend to no white man who treats them ill. I took up the rifle only because you took up the spear. You have laid down the spear; I lay down the rifle."

He suited the action to the word, and offered his hand with a smile. "What! not shake hands? Why should you hate me?"

"I take no white man's hand!" said Umpqua, speaking in English, and rapidly and distinctly, though with a marked Indian accent. "I hate the white man! Why? I had wide plains and rivers of beasts and birds, fishes and roots. I said not to the white man, Come; but when he came, I did not say, Go. When he was hungry and cold, I gave him skins and food. When he was strong, he took them away from me. When he was weak, I let him hunt on my prairies. When he was strong, he said, 'Go away; you shall not come here!'

"I hate the white man! Why? I had many

wives, but one I loved best. I found a white squaw lost in the woods. She sat not down, like the red squaw, cheerful to die, but held out her hands to Umpqua, and wept. I despised her; but I mercied her, too, and gave her sweet berries to eat, and led her to my lodge, and said to my best wife, 'Get up from my best skin, for the white squaw is a guest, and is weary.' We fed her many days. When her people came asking her, I gave her up safe. While I hunted, the white man stole my best wife. She cried to my son as he passed. The boy ran to his mother. The white man shot him dead.

"I hate the white man! Why? Two more sons I had. The diggers (miners) come and say, 'They have killed a white man; we will have them to kill.' I say, 'No, they have not killed.' Your blue-coat chief at the strong house, he say, 'No, you shall not have them to kill.' They say to him, 'Then we kill you!' Then he say, 'Kill away, if you can kill;—me first, and them after!' At last, all the white men, they say together, 'Let us have them, to try whether they have killed; and, if they have not, let them come back all safe.' So I say, 'All right,' for I know they have not killed; so the boys go with soldiers. They are tried; they have not killed. 'Take them back safe,' say the law chief. As they come, they are killed. Then I say, 'I hate the white man! I will live beside him no more. I will go to the wild bears and eagles. They are kinder and truer.' Then the white man say, 'It is war! Umpqua is bad. He will kill us. Hunt him out.'

"I hate the white man! Why? I build my lodge and kindle my fire alone, far up on the high, cold mountain. I say to my sick and my old, my women,



my babies, 'Here you shall rest, safe and warm; for who wants the bare bleak mountain, but bears and eagles and Umpqua? This we will have to ourselves, better than plains with bad neighbours.' By night, the bad Bostons awake us, with pistols and rifles. I fight them. They run, and come back with a thunder-gun and lightning-balls from the strong-house. They hunt my sick and old, my squaws and my babies, in the cold and dark, from steep slippery mountain to mountain. They shiver, they stumble, they sicken, they starve, they die, too fast. So I say, 'Let us now have peace!' But the Bostons say, 'You are bad. You love us not. You have killed us too many; we must chastise you. We will frighten you first.' They cannot make Umpqua afraid! But I send to the blue-coat chief and say, 'Only let them not hurt the women and babies; we hurt not your women and babies.' The bad Bostons catch on a high rock one of my sick squaws, with two papooses. Some say, 'Hurt them not.' Some shoot. She fall. My babies' brains are spilt on the stones.

"I hate the white man! Why? I have left yet one daughter. When I am great, she is beautiful in her skins, and beads, and feathers; and every young chief come from far, and say, 'Give her to me.' But I say, 'No; I love her too well; she may not leave my country.' And every young chief come from near, and say, 'Give her to me;' but I say, 'No; I love her too well; she may not leave my lodge.' Her beautiful robes gone; her beautiful face going. She is tired, and cannot rest; she is hungry and faint, and I have often nothing to give her. Then I say, 'Go; sleep safe in the white squaw's house, and eat her bread. Old Umpqua can wander; but for girls it is

bad.' I am sad, but she is safe. The white squaw sick. She moan, 'I want water.' The girl say, 'I go to the spring.' She say, 'Go not; the Bostons will catch you.' My girl say, 'No, I can run too fast.' They see her. They call her. She stop not. They shoot. She drop dead!"

"*Can* all this that he says be true?" cried Herman, turning to Mr. Grubbe, who had entered with the crowd which at the outcries of Weahwashtay had instantly filled the lodge.

"I'd like to know what can't be true that's too bad, in voo of the depravity of our fallen natur, sir," replied the old man, wiping his nose a great deal between pity and indignation.

A cry from Weahwashtay recalled their attention to the poor outcast. His tall frame reeled. His eyes were glazed. His hands were groping in the air, as if seeking some friendly ones to grasp them again, at last, to lead him on his last, long journey. With wail upon wail, Weahwashtay clasped them in her own; and then, as if seized with his death-pangs, but determined, a chief to the last gasp, to yield to them only at his own time and pleasure, he, swaying to and fro, went down and down, kneeling first on one knee, and then on both, then sitting, and then slowly falling backwards, like a man literally sinking by inches into his grave. After a few moments, he recovered himself enough to speak again, though in an altered tone: "All gone.—Breath gone.—Heart gone.—Umpqua gone.—Weahwashtay,—I am not fit to die."

This appeal was answered by Weahwashtay's instantly, in the midst of her tears and sobs, heaping together the finest clothes in the lodge, and even snatching from her own dress, and that of her unresisting

husband, their most precious ornaments, to clothe and deck the lean, scarred, half-naked form before her. Umpqua received her cares with evident satisfaction, and even assisted her in them feebly, from time to time, so far as his weakness and the stupor which was stealing upon him would permit.

His appeal was answered also by Mr. Grubbe, who, kneeling beside him, eagerly put to him the ordinary technical theological questions of his school. At first, between the deafness and dulness of approaching death, and the indistinctness of the good grieving man's articulation, Umpqua did not seem to hear or understand. When he did, he neither received satisfaction nor gave it. Mr. Grubbe, greatly shocked and distressed, assured him in his most earnest and compassionate manner, that if he died in his present state of feeling, an eternity of hell-fire must be his portion. Umpqua, reclosing his weary eyes, merely replied, phlegmatically, "Then me get a little sleep now, first." Mr. Grubbe persisted, and roused him to anger. Drawing in his short breath, to hiss out his whispers more distinctly, he turned his head with an effort, and opening his eyes, rolled them round upon his ghostly adviser, saying as an after-thought, "I hate the white man! Why? He say, 'Spell my books, and pray my God. He make us good.' He make you wise, happy.' I spell your white books. I pray your white God. He make me not happy. He make you not good. He make you too strong, and crafty, and bad, and lying, for Umpqua. You make me die, with my young dead before,—in the lodge, in the skins of another! Go. I *will* die; but you shall not see. Too many white face I saw in my life. I will see none while I die. Go!"

He was seized with another spasm; and Herman saw that it was too late to hope to change a state of mind, in his circumstances so natural if not pardonable, that their presence, and the associations and emotions which it awakened, could only increase his sufferings and hasten his end, and that Mr. Grubbe was in danger of stirring up, in the already too much offended friends of the sufferer, a very serious exasperation, not only against himself, but his religion, if he persisted long in preaching it with a pertinacity so untimely. He therefore left the lodge at once, and took the old man with him, "with gentle yet determined force." Mr. Grubbe found it hard to forgive him; for when they arose in the morning, Umpqua was dead. He had smiled away his poor, worn, harassed, hunted life very peacefully at last, in full-dress, with his sister's hand clasped close in one of his, and her husband's best spear in the other.

"That precious soul, sir! I trust its everlasting destruction lies more on your conscience than mine; but I shall never forgive myself."

"My dear old friend! How can you suppose, that our merciful Father in heaven has anything but the tenderest pity in store for that poor ignorant child of Nature, who had been, if we can trust his own account at all, so much more sinned against than sinning?"

"He denied his Lord, sir!"

"What did he know about his Lord? Nothing, most likely, except a few bald, confused, contradictory statements, which he could not understand, from a class of men whom he had found for the most part, in matters which he could understand, to be utterly untrustworthy. He spoke disrespectfully of our white god, just as he might have done of the *totem* of any

Indian of whom he had reason to think very ill. He spoke very disrespectfully to you, too, not knowing you. Cannot you forgive him?"

"Do you take me for a Turk, sir?"

"No, for a most forgiving and compassionate Christian, but yet for a far less forgiving, considerate, and compassionate person than Christ. The guilt of this poor savage's abjuration seems to lie, chiefly or solely, with those who drove him to it, by disgracing and practically denying their faith; and very heavy guilt theirs is; and we might have come in for a share of it, if, when he thought he had at length fairly got away from all of us to die in peace among his kindred, we had remained to beset him on his death-bed, while the very sight and sound of us, if half he said was true, might well have been enough to unsettle his reason. Do you think we could have made him love our God, and all in a minute, too, by making him angry with us?"

"I believe in instantaneous conversion, sir."

"I scarcely believe in any great chance of it in that case. Besides, it might have taken but very little more,—after what his friends had just heard,—of what they must have considered persecution of him, to induce them to murder you; and then what, do you think, would have become of *their* souls?"

"We had ought to do our dooty, and take the consequences, sir."

"No doubt; but ought we to do it in an injudicious way, and thereby bring bad consequences unnecessarily upon others?"

"I am content to be a fool for the gospel, sir."

"So was St. Paul; but he was also contented to be all things to all men, and to give none unnecessary



offence. Besides, I do not think we were beginning with Umpqua, in a Christian—I mean a Christ-like—way. He was worn-out and broken-hearted. Christ said, ‘Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest,’—not ‘Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy-laden, or I will give you hell-fire.’—Indeed, you must forgive me. I do not mean to forget for a moment that I am a much younger and less experienced man than you; but I should be exceedingly sorry, for the Indian’s sake, to have them further irritated now. We must remember what an unfortunate impression Umpqua’s story must have made upon such impetuous, undisciplined creatures.”

Herman sent a resplendent brooch of ruby-glass and gilding to Weahwashtay, as an additional decoration for the corpse, which sat in state in a lodge near her own. He also requested permission to come to the funeral, and sat among the silent mourners patiently through that day and the following night, as sincere a mourner as any there; while, within him, his heart preached to him an awful sermon, upon the text, “Woe unto the world, because of offences! For it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh.” He mourned not only as a man, for the poor fellow-man so wantonly done to death, but as a Christian, for his Master crucified afresh even in these days, and put to an open shame, by the barbarities practised by those baptized in his name upon their weaker brethren; and, as a patriot, for the disgrace of his country, so harsh a step-mother to some of her feebler swarthier sons.

His unaffected sympathy and sorrow were not lost upon his hosts. They, by the time they went out about their usual business again, invited him to join them at

hunt and feast as freely as before. He hoped the storm had blown over, and, no longer fearing for Mr. Grubbe, went out as usual, leaving him to take care of himself. The opportunity was not lost upon that worthy man. On returning from a solitary ride one day, Herman met several very sinister looks from an equal number of pairs of dark eyes, and found Weahwashtay, with her baby in her arms, sitting at the door of her lodge, a most gory and unpleasing spectacle, having cut herself into the very image of ugliness with a knife. On his kindly asking her the cause, she, altogether contrary to her custom, turned away her head moodily, and made no reply.

Herman easily coaxed the whole story out of Whattaraskle. Mr. Grubbe had been easing his conscience by assuring the tribe, according to the boy, that they were all going to be burnt up, as soon as they died, by his white god, because a white man ate a papaw once, a long time ago, if they didn't get something,—a hard word,—Whattaraskle couldn't say it, and didn't know what it meant, but he guessed it was some kind of new totem ;—and that his white god was burning Umpqua very bad now, and never would stop, because he spoke ill of the white god, and did not love the Bostons. (It was very unreasonable in the Indians not to be grateful to their instructor, no doubt ; but might not we be a little ungrateful to the Romish priest, who, after we had had a relation, or friend, worried out of his life by the inquisition, should, with the best intentions, endeavour perseveringly to convince us, for the good of our souls, that our dear departed was partaking of unmingled brimstone in consequence of his having indulged, in his ignorance, in uncomplimentary expressions respecting the triple tiara, and died out of

fervent charity with the inquisitors. Perhaps, in such circumstances, even civilized we might be somewhat unreasonable. Let us hope not; but who can tell?) Whattaraskle further deposed that Weahwashtay did not want the Meneaskas there, bringing their white god around the lodges; because the papoose was sick, and she was afraid, if it died, he would get it to burn, too. Moreover Whattaraskle thought that the white god must be silly as well as cross; because the old Meneaska said that if they minded him, and did not drink fire-water nor smoke tobacco, he would pay them by making them rest always, a great long life,—so much longer than this, it never would leave off,—and do nothing but sit still and sing in the clouds, and never jump down and run. But Whattaraskle did not want to run and ride a little while, and then rest a great long while. He ran and rode a great while and rested a little while, and jumped up again.

This view of the case, Herman could very well understand and sympathize with, with his young blood still dancing in his veins, like that of the Indian boy, from the hunts of the preceding days. He felt how much more even this rugged life, with its trials and triumphs, was to him in his moments of highest and purest emotion, than a stagnant eternity of mere clouds and psalm-singing could be. He did not believe that God, the fountain-head of life, genius, and action, the ever-working, ever-creative Mind of minds, could have so wondrously and variously endowed the human soul, with no other purpose than that of smiting all its powers but two or three, almost as soon as it began to put them forth, with an everlasting catalepsy. He did not in the least believe that the Bible, rightly understood, confirmed any such ideas. He was sorry

to interfere between Mr. Grubbe and his neophytes ; but, for their sake and his, the case appeared to be one which left him no choice.

Herman at once sought out Taiquinsuwatish, who was a kind-hearted and, for an utterly uneducated, a remarkably intelligent man, took him to his tent, propitiated him with simple dainties, and then told him in confidence, that he was sorry to hear that some of his young men, who could scarcely be expected to be so sensible as himself, had been displeased by some things which had been said by Mr. Grubbe. Mr. Grubbe loved them, and meant to tell them nothing but the truth. It was a pity to be angry with him, for he was a good man ; but, as Taiquinsuwatish might have observed, he was a very simple man ; and there were some things in the Great Spirit's message very puzzling to white men themselves,—quite too puzzling for Mr. Grubbe to understand, he was sure. If Taiquinsuwatish would give him leave, Herman would tell him and his young men what he knew about it. Flattered and curious, Taiquinsuwatish readily gave his consent.

Herman led them to a little distance from the camp, that Weahwashtay might not again be frightened. Then, while a burning mountain before him, now veiling its face with smoke and now glaring with flame, reminded him solemnly of Moses and Sinai, he explained to them,—I leave my readers, from their past and future knowledge of Herman, to imagine how,—the simple theology and ethics of the gospels.

At every pause in his discourse, there was from the attentive listeners a punctual response of “ Hoogh !” At the close, Taiquinsuwatish came up to Herman and took him by the hand, saying in his broken English,

which he was proud of speaking, "I been like little child, uneasy, feeling round in the dark for something,—I know not what. Now I hope learn something true, for help me to learn my people do right. Give me truth. I love not silly lies."

Herman determined that this appeal should not be disregarded, and that, as soon as possible after his return home, he would endeavour to send out a missionary, better instructed than himself, to this interesting and inquiring people. In the meantime he taught them what he knew, and was always listened to with good will, even by Weahwashtay after her child had recovered. Mr. Grubbe, by means of his powerful mediation, was again taken into favor, but not as a theologian. "Man good,—talk *kapse-is*—bad,"—was the most merciful verdict pronounced upon him by the copper-faced public. Taiquinsuwatish declared that he must either "shut up his tongue, or leave; for if he made mad the young men, they would do him something, and he [Taiquinsuwatish] could not help; and then the Bostons would come." Mr. Grubbe thought Herman extremely latitudinarian, and altogether reprehensible; but Herman was very glad, notwithstanding, that he was alive to tell him so, and contented himself with saying to himself, "Great God! how is this poor evil world ever to be hallowed, if wickedness is so wide and goodness is so narrow?"

Far away there we must now leave him yet a little longer, seeing fox-dances, buffalo-dances, and all sorts of wild-beast dances, war-parties, hunting-parties, gambling-parties, and all sorts of savage parties,—seeing mourners give away their best horses or clothes, for grief at the loss of their friends or loves, just as he had given away himself for grief at the loss of his Con-



stance,—thinking how like an elvish parody upon our life all their life was, with its worthless finery so highly prized, its silly, fantastic, imperative point of honor, its wars and single combats, about nothing and bringing about nothing, and its endless toil to no end but the grave,—wondering whether, in the sight of God and the holy angels, our civilized pomp, and worldly strifes and achievements, were worth any more than their uncivilized, or would seem so in ours, a few years after, when we should look back upon them with the eyes of departing spirits,—and sometimes wishing, with the waywardness of youth and sorrow, that there henceforth he might spend all his days, seeing the crowded haunts of white-skinned men no more, till in old age it should seem to him a half-forgotten dream that they had ever been his own and, clad in skins, eating strange food, and speaking a strange language, could wear his life away, retired in these wild solitudes, with their uncouth but not ungrateful children, sporting with them, teaching them, and protecting them, revered by them in his life, and seeing their dark weeping faces around him in his death.

## CHAPTER IX.

## THE KNIGHT FASTS.

“I think a wise and constant man ought never to grieve while he doth play, as a man may say, his own part truly, though others be out.”

SIR PHILIP SYDNEY.

“Let any one set his heart, in these days, to do what is right, and nothing else, and it will not be long ere his brow is stamped with all that goes to make up the heroical expression—with noble indignation, noble self-restraint, great hopes, great sorrows; perhaps, even, with the print of the martyr’s crown of thorns.”

KINGSLEY.

“AND David went to Samuel, to Naioth of Ramah, and dwelt there;” these words, by some perhaps whimsical association, kept running in my head this morning, while I sat with Clara Arden. David had been high in favor and in hope. He had fallen through no fault of his. He had been forced to leave all, home, kindred, friends, and even his beloved,—and she was a princess,—and had taken refuge on the mountain, with the grim old prophet. The gentle shepherd was in process of change into the kingly warrior. Nursed by Love and Song, he had become the pupil of hero-fashioning Adversity. He had thrown the harp from his fine touch, and was learning to say, “Lord, teach my hands to war, and my fingers to fight.” He was anointed, indeed, but uncrowned; and his peaceful, harmonious, kindly life, was doomed to be thenceforward a long battle. With some change of costume and scenery, David seemed to stand before me in a picture,

which Clara took me into her *sitting-room* to see, and wept while she looked at.

It was a large and admirably painted picture, of a youth in the morning of manhood. He stood alone in a wild mountain landscape, with lightning darting from a heavy, leaden, and lurid cloud above him, and all the air around him darkened with a look of thunder; out of which his face seemed almost to shine in the glare of the flash. A coat of shaggy skin was girt about his slight waist with a soldier's sash. He held and lightly leaned upon a rifle in his right hand; and I scarcely needed to be told as I was, that the grasp of that slender hand had been, at need, like the gripe of Death, which only Death could unloose; nor that the moccasined foot, planted so lightly and firmly among the crags where he stood, was as sure and almost as swift as that of the huge-horned Rocky Mountain sheep, which, perched just above him, looked down upon him confidingly, while beneath him, on the other side, a wolf skulked away. His features were of the finest and rarest Roman type, at once regular, symmetrical, delicate, and noble. His coloring was dark, mellow, warm, and clear. Such outlines with such tints would alone suffice to make a very handsome man. There was an expression about this man which made him far more than that. Slender as he was, he looked so mysteriously, infinitely, full of power and life,—not the ugly, gross, soulless, material life of the prize-fighter or the anaconda, but the irresistible nerve and energy of some superhuman man or manly angel!—It was easy to see that it was a high and strong heart, which sent up the generous red blood to bear witness of it in those smooth olive cheeks. That mouth was not more sweet than strong. Those deep,

dark, musing eyes, seemed overcast and darkened with the shadow of approaching doom,—to feel, but not to fear it. One would not like to meet a foe in such a man. With such a man at one's side, one would scarcely fear to cope with any other foe. Resolute, concentrated, imperial, impassioned more than passionate, he seemed as if born to subdue first himself and then the world. If he was such in the dawn of his manhood, what was he in its prime? What and where are such men in their prime? Go, ask the seraphim! In what age has the world not rejected some of those of whom it was not worthy? They overcome it; but the Cross by which, like their Master, they conquer, lifts them from it; they shake its dust from their climbing feet, and leave it beneath them; and a cloud receives them out of their sight.

But was it so with Herman? Let us hope not. Let us go on, and we shall see. He had unboyed himself wonderfully in the few months of his absence. Perhaps we are, many of us, made old by months, and days even, rather than by years. There was an alteration in him which, though she would hardly own it even to herself, surprised and disappointed Clara. She felt it from the first, even in the bright week that she and her brothers spent, immediately after his arrival, at Sea Farm, that they might not fail of their annual pilgrimage. She had a more assiduous, considerate, and devoted brother, than she had ever had before; but he no longer needed that she should devote herself to him. She had got back a man instead of a stripling; and he seemed to her a sort of changeling. She admired, respected, and loved the man; but then, she missed the boy. It was all very well to have some one to pet her; but she had always had Ned to serve her in that capa-

city. If it had not been for Tommy and Bessy, she did not know what she should have done now for something to pet. She tried to convince herself that it was the bronze of travel that made half the difference in him, and her fancy the rest; but when the former wore off, the latter remained the same,—if it was a fancy; but she had, howsoever slowly and unwillingly, to make up her mind that it was not. His face was very handsome still,—far handsomer than ever before, Edward said,—but it was not the dear old young face, which had leaned on her shoulder so often, and which she had been promising herself, every day for weeks past, that she should soon see again. That was gone,—nobody knew where,—and she should never see it again. She could have cried to think so. The look that Constance wondered at, and admired in spite of herself, in her last interview with him, had become, when at rest, the most habitual expression of his countenance. It was often, at such times, almost stern in its determination. There was that in it which showed, that the soul within had thrown its silken robes of dalliance off, and put its armor on. At such times, Clara often sat and watched him unobserved, until her interest grew to pain, as if the change had put some barrier, inexplicable but impassable, between him and her; and then she would rise involuntarily, go to him, and put her hand in his or force some playful speech, when out would still come his own old smile, all the more sweet and bright by contrast, and show her that, however it might be towards others, towards her he could not change, except to become less her charge and play-fellow and more her protector, or, if she would have it so, her counsellor.

There might have been more reasons than she knew



for his gravity. In the first place, well as he acknowledged that her affection deserved his confidence, and hard as he had tried to accord it, he had probably not succeeded in telling her half how well he loved Constance Aspenwall. (What man, who knows how to love, ever cares to expatiate much on a disappointed love?) It was strange perhaps that he should love her so; but so he did. He had never been able to see any fault in her, from the beginning of their acquaintance to its close, but one; and even that his dazzled eyes saw as something apart from her,—not her fault, but the fault of her training, or want of training. Her soul on one occasion, and on one alone, had appeared before him in an ugly dress; but that he considered as merely the fault of the dress-maker. His passionate tenderness immediately substituted for it the garb of a goddess; and in this her image stood evermore clothed in his thoughts. She was that rare thing,—so much oftener heard of than seen,—a perfect beauty, and moreover brilliant, ardent, and, where she loved, ravishingly lovely; yet she was certainly not, at this time at least, all that he thought her.

I cannot undertake to defend his delusion; but in extenuation I must state, that it is a common, not to say a universal, one. Enamored lads and lasses, you see in each other not what you have really found, but what you have ideally found,—what Mr. Dickens says you all see in your looking-glasses,—“the pleasing reflection of your own fancy.” Sly Puck, believe me, did not use up all of the juice of the “little western flower” upon Titania’s eyes, nor on those of the Athenian lovers. I can see the traces of it upon the drooping lids of almost all of you. Cupid weaves and baits the snares for you; but he leaves it to Chance to

set them in the way of the unwary. Tityrus, if, at the time when you first saw Amaryllis in Italy, the Fates had thrown you in England in the neighbourhood of a trap with Phillis in it, Phillis would have caught you; and you would have preferred her “herbs and other savory\* messes,” to the juice of all Amaryllis’s figs and oranges. Corydon and Amaryllis, ditto, ditto. Collectively you would have worshipped your golden-haired and raven-tressed divinities as extravagantly,—I mean appreciatingly,—as you now do; severally you would have changed idols. “Propinquity, my dears,” as Mrs. Broadstone said, “Propinquity!”

“Leaves have their time to fall;”

and when it comes, fall they do headlong, in the dust, on the flower-bed, or among the nettles, as the case may be; and so have hearts their time, chiefly between the ages of sixteen and thirty, to fall,—in love;—and they do it likewise in a rather precipitate and indiscriminate way, as the wind may happen to blow; but Herman’s fell upon a queen-lily, and clung to it henceforth. He was not mistaken in thinking Constance a rare woman, if he was, in thinking her more than a woman. He thought her more than a woman, and suffered accordingly.

In the second place, there was a change in his position in society, in consequence of his speech,—speeches, rather, for he soon found occasion to follow up the former with others equally eloquent, and much more effective because, with growing tact, better adapted to his audiences.—That change in his position can perhaps be thoroughly understood only by those who, members themselves of unfashionable political parties, have moved in fashionable society when parties ran

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\* Let us as an emendation propose *saviorier*.

high. He had hitherto enjoyed his share of the social consideration which two or three generations of wealth, tastefully used, had entailed upon his family. Without the least self-conceit, he had hitherto, from pure inexperience, want of knowledge of the world, and confidence in the good faith of others, unthinkingly as young persons are apt to do in similar circumstances, taken it for granted that the cordial welcome and charming courtesy which he met with wherever he went, were the expression of a sincere liking and respect for his person and character, and that they could hardly be forfeited among the generality of his neighbours, unless by misconduct on his part. To his surprise, the welcome, the charm, and the courtesy were, not to be sure universally, but somewhat generally, altered. The well-bred now often treated him with cool good-breeding; the ill-bred, with cool ill-breeding. Some honestly thought his political course wrong; some, without caring particularly whether it was wrong or right, thought it most inconvenient and exasperating; and others, again, without thinking at all, took their cue from the rest.

It is no doubt a very trifling thing to have a single little drop of cold water thrown upon one's head; but a very long succession of such little drops, dropped upon the same worn and intenerated spot, may in time have an unpleasant effect even upon one's reason; and it certainly must strike the sufferer oddly at first, when he finds old neighbours, whom he has always regarded as friends as far as anything, volunteering as *amateur* executioners, whenever he comes in their way, to administer each his globule of the homœopathic, hydro-pathic, cumulative, torment. When it falls upon a heart that already knows its own secret separate bitterness,

the case is harder yet. Cold water, however, is a bad or a good thing, according to the nature of the stuff it has to act upon. It softens plaster; steel, it tempers. Let Tyranny, social or individual, plunge in it the sword of Liberty glowing from the forge. The sword will hardly drown, or come out again the more pliant for the treatment.

Herman would not mention to his sister the petty daily annoyances to which he was subjected. He thought that women, being excluded from the agreeable excitements of political life, ought also to be privileged against the disagreeable. He did not wish to separate her from her old friends. He knew her well enough to fear that, however the opaque polish of her manners might cover her indignation, her feelings, if she once saw how matters stood, might be seriously and permanently altered towards any of them who proved fickle towards him. To Edward he did drop a hint or two. Edward administered consolation somewhat after the fashion of Eliphaz the Temanite, Bileam the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite, rolled into one. In the first place, he extenuated, if he did not defend, Coventry; in the second, he denied its existence :

“ You have always held yourself aloof from other people, my dear man. Why should you expect them to stand by you ? You have been a perfect Peter the Hermit ; and now you come out before them with a ragamuffin party, and preach a crusade against all their souls hold dear,—or mean to hold dear, if they can,—factory *denims*, and negro stuffs, for instance. Not being very well acquainted with you previously,—whose fault is that?—they were unwearied in requesting the honor and the pleasure of your company,—they naturally think you

crazy. Learn a lesson for the future ; and if you expect to influence men, and have them stick to you in times like these, show yourself among them, and make yourself agreeable and necessary to them at all times."

"I always felt kindly towards our acquaintances. I supposed that they knew it."

"How?"

"By taking it for granted, I suppose ; as I did, that they felt kindly towards me."

"You were a guileless youth, if you took anything of the sort for granted. The generous public, not being guileless, usually requires stronger proof. Besides, you labor under the further disadvantage of belonging to a conspicuous and rather wealthy family. Don't you know that wealth and family are positive sins against the peace of Demos, to be atoned for, at the jealous old fellow's tribunal, only by general sociability and scrupulous observance on the part of him who is guilty of them? An unfashionable and obscure man may keep his own company to himself without offence, perhaps. In a man like you, reserve is proof positive of pride, arrogance, and *incivisme*. He may at any time be ostracized or guillotined for it, at a moment's warning, on the slightest provocation, and without the slightest interference in his behalf from the unconcerned bystanders. 'Hurra, you ain't got no friends!' as the mob remarked, though happily without foundation, in the case of Mr. Pickwick in the pound. If Mr. Pickwick, like some wise persons I could name, had kept himself closeted with the cold remains of Homer, Sophocles, Demosthenes, or some other dead ancient, and relied on no other means of attaching to himself live moderns than privately wishing them well,



and letting them alone, he *would* have had no friends ; and then the shower of eggs and turnips might have lasted till this time, or until the hen-coops and green-grocers' shops were exhausted, for aught that Messrs. Wardle, Winkle, and Company, would have cared. Anybody who liked,—a good many always do like on these occasions,—would have pelted him. Who would have protected him ?”

“ I see. It is half my own fault, or folly. Edward, how came you to be so wise ?”

“ By doing nothing, my dear boy,—an invaluable practice ; it gives one so much time for thinking !”

“ You have been studying human nature,—one side of it at least,—while I have been poring over my books. Your knowledge is more practical than most of mine, and fresher ; but are all its lessons so gloomy as this which you have been giving to me ?”

“ The gloom, if there is any, is in your own dark eyes. Mine are lighter. I regard life as a book of satire, illustrated with very amusing caricatures ; or at the worst, it is only a black background, against which a parti-colored and not altogether sooty character,—like mine, I flatter myself,—appears to advantage, radiant by contrast. I should look gloomy myself, I fear, in the light in which you walk, star-trampling reformer. The world is dark, you may say ; it eclipses the sun almost half of the time. What if it does ? I avail myself of a *lucifer*, touch up my gas, dress for a ball or the theatre, go out, and enjoy the night. The night is a very good thing, after all. It serves me to laugh, and you to learn, in. If I had to choose between the two, all of one or all of the other, I should prefer the earth to the sun, I believe. I do not want too much light.”

"You are in the clouds now. Come down where I can understand you."

"Understand, then, with regard to yourself, that I suspect you are merely beginning to see the world as it is, instead of as it ought to be; whence arises at first an unpleasant surprise in your youthful mind, at not finding it heaven. Men get their bodily eyes open earlier than kittens do; but it takes the cleverest of us more than your twenty-one years to do the same by our mental optics, and to learn to see things for ourselves with them exactly as they are. Furthermore, I think you made a great mistake in going off to the West just when you did. Run before geese, and, of course, they will pursue you with hisses; because they *are* geese."

"But I did not run away for fear of the geese. I never dreamed of such a thing."

"I know that, of course; but how are geese to know it? But let by-gones be by-gones. You have come back again, at any rate. Go out now, whenever and wherever you're invited; and let people see that you're neither afraid of them nor ashamed of yourself. Let them cry for about the space of two hours, months, or years, Great are Mammon, Daniel, and his 'Tay-riff,' gods of the Bostonians! They'll get hoarse after a while, and then stop. You're only a nine days' wonder. They'll soon want the pillory for somebody else. Remember however, that I am arguing upon your supposition, and not by any means on my own perception, of your personal unpopularity. I suspect it exists chiefly, if not wholly, in your own poetical fancy."

This was the last as well as the first conversation, which the young men held together upon this subject; for, Edward's conscience pricking him a little at the

close, he presently with some heat and abruptness announced an intention on his part, to "kick, no matter where, in Beacon Street or on 'Change, or anywhere else, anybody, no matter who," whom he caught "giving himself any such airs;" and, as Herman thought that his little French boots might be much better employed, he said nothing further.

Edward was, indeed, triply perturbed. He saw, so far as he would open his eyes to see, that there was much reason for his brother's endeavouring to rouse the country to take the stand he aimed at against, not the South, but a few of the *Southerners*. He was, with all his frivolity, no wilful perverter of youth in general; and as to Herman in particular, in his secret heart he admired and revered him to such a degree, that not only was he confident that it would be in vain to try to bring him down from his elevation, but he would have felt himself as sacrilegious in doing so, if he could, as the horror-struck sportsman, who, when the wide-winged, round-eyed owl tumbled out of the tree before him in the twilight, shrieked in agonies of ineffectual remorse that he had "shot a cherubim." Yet he was too epicurean to place himself at his young brother's side in the battle. No wonder, therefore, if he felt somewhat cross; he certainly had enough to make him.

What advice he had given was good; and Herman resolutely followed it, so far at least as to go out and show himself wherever he was invited. His manner became more formed, manly, and imposing; and thus, though not undignified before, gained in dignity more than it had lost in cordiality and vivacity. His honest innate, but hitherto latent, pride, (if we must call an unchristened and not altogether unvirtuous trait by the

name of a vice,) defensive, not offensive, being called forth to repress the insolence of others, ennobled his noble countenance more and more, and heightened the "Coriolanus look" which Edward admired so highly, —so highly, that he insisted on having the picture, a description of which serves as a sort of frontispiece to this chapter, taken for him by a certain justly-celebrated artist, in Herman's twenty-third year.

Dr. Arden was not alone in his admiration. The young *belles*, too, appreciated the young orator's personal advantages and graces, and, caring much more about partners than politics, would have elected him one of the reigning *beaux* of the time, if he had pleased. Their charms, however, served only to remind him of others to him far more charming, and to make his constant heart grieve the more for his Constance. In spite of Clara's remonstrances, therefore, he was too often to be seen standing alone before statues, pictures, or flowers, or in corners, looking very handsome, picturesque, abstracted, and, as she declared, "Byronic," and remembering his social duties only now and then, when he beheld some plain damsel or noteless dame in distress, and, constituting himself a volunteer member of the Humane Society, pressed forward to her relief, walked a *quadrille* with her, fed her, or found her coach for her, according to her need.

How "weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable," did the scenes of gayety, so-called, appear to his saddened eyes bedimmed with cataracts of tears unshed. He stood among them alone in spirit, often wondering sadly by himself what others found there to make them all so merry. Often and often while people at his side were telling one another, in apparent ecstasy, "How delightful!" it all was, he could have found it in his

heart to groan, "Lover and friend thou hast taken from me!"

At these times, it was hardest for him to forget how, one short year before,—indifferent as he was in general to what is generally termed society,—an invitation to any entertainment where Constance might be, had been to him as a ticket of admission to Paradise; how he had thought of it by day and dreamed of it by night, with more and more rapture, hour by hour, as the appointed time for it drew nearer; how he had hurried to it and arrived at it, in spite of all his resolutions, the earliest of all the guests; how the whole house had seemed lighted up with her coming presence far more than with gas or chandelier; and, then, how she had slowly, grandly, entered and smiled on him, and glorified the place.

In his vacuity and *ennui*, he for the first time found out, by contrast, how very happy he had been while he had fancied himself merely looking forward to happiness, in his fulness of hope. Fulness of fruition, the infinite soul of man is scarcely intended to find upon this finite earth. Half the happiness in which sanguine Youth is so rich, is raised by a mortgage which Hope takes on the expected and usually much over-rated happiness of Manhood. Manhood, hence, often finds himself a bankrupt therein. Hope but lately had been promising Herman successful love, fame, and that he should soon greatly and acceptably serve his country. His love,—no matter! His patriotism had called down upon him the reproach of treason to his country. His eloquence was already becoming famous; but its effects were accounted his infamy; and he read each of its successive triumphs chiefly in the averted eyes and deeper darkening round him of



the "old familiar faces." If his brother and sister could have guessed half of the almost girlish suffering on these occasions of the still too soft and sensitive heart, which the disappointed, wronged, and slandered young lover and patriot hid so bravely under his composed and commanding exterior, they would have spared him, and entreated him to spare himself. It was quite as well for him, therefore, that they could not.

Let no one ask for greatness, who is not ready to endure great agonies. Groans, self-stifled, are the native air of Manhood and Heroism,—harsh, but wholesome, like the biting, bracing northwest wind. When the wind sets in that quarter, oh man, if you be a man, and if the errand which calls you out to face it be a good one, set your teeth, breast it, and breathe it. If you were puny, cold-blooded, and sluggish, it might chill you, and kill you; but, being strong and active, it will make you only the stronger. By and by it will cease, and you will glow after it, as with a generous fire in your veins. Let this smooth, round world sometimes show you the hollow inside of it. You will be the less likely to attribute too much weight to it hereafter.—It is an ugly sight; and you may feel for years afterwards as if the ground was mined beneath your feet. What of that, if it leads you to make the greater haste to plant them firmly on the Rock of Ages? For years afterwards, you may feel as if there was no earthly stay that might not in a moment, without a moment's warning, give way and crumble from you. Your insecurity will be your safety, if it drives you to cling to the Cross.

Further: average undisciplined human nature is a looking-glass for average undisciplined human nature.

Just as your neighbours are treating you, you in their place, mortifying as it is to acknowledge it, would probably have treated them in yours. Unless you are very disinterested or very shamefully selfish, you would rather of the two, that they should show you how such conduct looks in them, than that they should see how it looked in you.—They are treating you as you in their place would probably have treated them, without this lesson, but as, after this lesson, you can never henceforward treat any honest man. After this lesson, you can never assist in thus laying under the ban any person who may, for aught you know, be acting faithfully and uprightly upon perfectly conscientious convictions, however they may differ from your own convictions conscientiously and cautiously arrived at, or your opinions hastily and ignorantly taken up.

Furthermore,—my reader, if you are old, you may know the truth of what I am about to say even better than I do ; but—if you are young, and your youth is innocently joyous, rejoice in your youth, and thank God that you can ; and, if it is troubled and its troubles are of your own foolish making, the best counsel that can be given you is, to unmake them again as fast as you may. But if it is not so,—if, honestly desiring to be happy, you cannot find the way,—if you are already discovering, like Herman, that your youth, which your childhood falsely fancied to be a pleasure-ground, is in reality doomed to be a school, and a harder one than your childhood ever entered,—if you feel it as bitter irony when those, who are old enough to know better, congratulate you in poetry or prose upon your youth as such, and inform you that, by reason of it,

you must needs be mysteriously and incomparably happy, and see everything about you flushed with the magic, rosy hues of joy and hope,—if, while your contemporaries seem to prove such sapient sayings true, by rejoicings which you can hardly understand, and know not how to share, you feel yourself lonely and left out,—if the world cannot satisfy you while you do not yet find in yourself the strength to reach heaven, then take heed to yourself. Much is given to you,—much discipline, much opportunity of winning through that discipline much good to yourself, perhaps to your fellow-beings ;—much is probably to be required of you.

Take courage. Be you sure of this : God has some good gift in His hand for every one of His faithful servants. If your turn to receive yours has not yet come, by no means go away from Him, nor murmur, but wait patiently and trustfully till it does. Many a garden that, under a cold sky, has no strawberries in June, will have peaches in August, or grapes in October. Watch and pray. Have fortitude and faith. Earthen-ware and glass are handled gingerly. Gold and diamonds are rubbed hard and sharply cut, to make them shine. Neither the glass nor the diamond knows why. He who has you in hand knows best how you ought to be treated, in order to make the most of you. A youth of struggles is the not uncommon prelude to a manhood of power. Wrestle with the adversary in what form soever he comes, in the name of the Lord. Conquer a peace. Wrestling will make you strong. From your fasts and vigils and seemingly-unheard prayers, you may yet be led forth at length, a mighty and thrice-blessed champion

before God and man, with a voice as of an angel saying in your ears, "When first thy prayer went forth, I was sent towards thee;" or if it be not before God and man that you are led forth, but before God and His angels only, to some service that, like the kingdom of God, "cometh not with observation," does the soldier who fights victoriously before the King and His lords, afflict himself because there are no peasants to look on?

## CHAPTER X.

## THE LADY'S PRIVILEGE.

"She spoke with passion, after pause, 'And were it wisely done,  
If we, who cannot gaze above, should walk the earth alone?  
If we, whose virtue is so weak, should have a will so strong,  
And stand blind on the rocks, to choose the right path from the  
wrong?

Ay sooth, we feel too strong in weal to need thee on that road,  
But woe being come, the soul is dumb that crieth not on God."

THE LAY OF THE BROWN ROSARY.

CONSTANCE, in the meanwhile, had been beginning to find out, to her utter dismay, how fearfully she had trifled with her happiness.

Fancy and Chance combine to cheat many and many a girl who sits in a drawing-room, as a fortune-teller cheats a girl who stands in a kitchen. The fortune-teller says in the kitchen, "On such a day, in such a street, you shall meet a nobleman, who does not yet know his parentage. He will offer himself to you. You shall marry him, after which all will be revealed. You may know him by his wearing two roses, one white one and one red one, at his button-hole."

In due time, she sends forth a neighbouring grocer, enamoured of the maiden, with the decoration specified; and the girl, beholding, says to herself, "There are the roses! Here is the nobleman."

Fancy, in like manner, foretells in the drawing-room, to the maiden who sits there, "You shall soon meet a man, handsome and rich, [usually, but with variations



to suit the taste of various maidens,] kind and excellent. Him you shall marry ; and he shall prove to be all that your heart can desire."

Chance puts in the damsel's way a rich and handsome suitor ; and, seeing the wealth and the beauty, the damsel confidently says to herself, " There are the wealth and the beauty ; here are the kindness and the excellence !"

As we have seen, the red roses by which Constance had been expecting to recognise her mate were genius and heroism. He had them, sure enough ; but they were out of her sight, snugly buttoned up in his bosom ; and thus it happened, that when her heart knew him, and, like a *spiritual* table, softly rapped and tapped, " This is certainly he !" her brain, not always the truest part of a mortal, doubted, and she was wholly unprepared for the unaccountable pain which she felt in turning from him. She thought that it would and must soon cease ; but, as sometimes when a nerve has been wounded, the pain only grew and grew.

Under the influence of one of those almost irresistible, and perhaps inexplicable unless demoniac, impulses, such as make a child in a passion tear up its garden or dash in pieces its favorite playthings, in spite of a lurking suspicion that it is pretty sure to be very sorry afterwards, she had hurried through the complete breaking off of their intercourse. Mr. and Mrs. Van Rooselandt, who had already stayed at the Revere a week longer than they intended, for her pleasure, willingly left Boston with her as soon as their trunks could be packed, and, within a week after their return to New York, provided her with a safe escort to Baltimore.

A slight feverish attack followed close upon the fatigue and excitement of the time, and served further to confuse her recollections of her parting interview with her lover. Even if she had been willing to return to it, dwell upon it, and consider in cool blood her own part in it, she would from the very first have had much difficulty in recalling it with any distinctness; and weeks and months passed, further effacing the record, before she was willing. She could not, when at last she tried to do so, recollect how decided and harsh her rejection of Herman had been, nor how impossible she had made it for him to renew his suit. Accustomed as she had been to unbounded servility on the part of her declared admirers, his silence at times appeared to her irritated and self-torturing pride a proof that the renunciation had been as much his as hers; and it was gall and worm wood to her to be forced by suffering to acknowledge to herself, that she could suffer for the sake of one not only, as she thought, unworthy of her, but indifferent to her.

"Why," she would say to herself, "did Nature make me no stronger or no weaker?—strong enough to renounce him, too weak to forget?—strong enough to transfix my own heart, too weak to draw the weapon out again?"

For some time after her recovery, in other respects, from her illness, her loss of color, appetite, and spirits, continued so apparent, that her aunt, Mrs. Ronaldson of Baltimore, at whose house she was, became quite distressed and alarmed about her. She conferred with the physician, who had attended her niece. He only laughed, shook his head, and declared that he "could discover no vestige of a sick-room obstacle to her being as fat and rosy as any dairy-maid; but that *belles*

would sometimes have their ball-room difficulties; and those an old pill-porter like himself could hardly be expected to understand or alleviate."

Mrs. Ronaldson was a most tender and warm-hearted woman, and would gladly have done for Constance anything that sympathy and kindness could do, if she could only have found out what to do, or what the matter was. She dared not question the repellant sufferer; but she ventured to write a pleasant note to Mrs. Van Rooselandt, begging she would tell her whether Constance had made any conquests while under her care; as she [Mrs. Ronaldson] naturally felt great interest in her successes; and as that young lady was always too modest to give any account of them herself.

Mrs. Van Rooselandt deposed, by return of post, that Miss Aspenwall was rather quiet and domestic while in Boston, and apparently little interested in general society. She became well acquainted there with a very agreeable family of unmarried orphans, named Arden, and passed much of her time with them *en famille*. But the eldest of the two brothers, though the finest young man in the world, was a confirmed bachelor, whom no one would think any more likely to marry than the man in the moon, and a little too unromantic and given to raillery and satire, too, she thought, to be likely to suit Miss Aspenwall's taste; and the younger, Mr. Herman Arden, was not only still quite a boy, but had behaved very sadly and disgraced himself at some place of public entertainment, she regretted to hear, just before they left Boston. She could not tell precisely how it was, for she was very much occupied in looking at some exquisite point-laces, at Mudge's, when she heard some ladies speak-

ing of it; but she was really very sorry that anything of the sort should have happened; for he was a genteel, pretty little youth, and very attentive to herself, and had always, in her presence, conducted himself in a perfectly gentlemanly manner. She thought Miss Arden must have been the chief attraction to her charge. In fact, if she was called upon to tell the whole truth, she feared that Miss Aspenwall was herself too little impressible to give any man the least encouragement to fall in love with her, though no doubt she could not fail to be universally admired wherever she went. The few young men, who were worth having, were all so spoiled in these flirting days! They expected the young ladies to meet them at least a quarter of the way! It was a pity; but she did not know what could be done for so very dignified a person as their young friend, unless they could induce Sir Charles Grandison or Thaddeus of Warsaw to come to life for her benefit.

(Whisper from behind the scenes: Mrs. Van Rooselandt had developed a fine natural talent for match-making in the way of her duty, in successively and successfully disposing of six daughters of her own to six sons,—simpletons, ignoramuses, horse-jockeys, and others,—of men of fortune.\* Like the celebrated British surgeon, who, after he retired from business, used to ride down to town now and then, and cut off a leg or an arm or two by way of amusement, this tri-

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\* It may be as well explicitly to state here, in order to avoid all possible risk of misconstruction, that men of fortune sometimes have sons of genuine merit. Some of the sons-in-law of Mrs. Van Rooselandt, for instance, had brothers who were fine fellows. But these fine fellows were not for the Misses Van Rooselandt. Their devoted parent did the best she could for them. Who could do more? One must not mind trifles in so important a matter as matrimony.

umphant lady, instead of resting lazily beneath her laurels, now took a disinterested pride and pleasure in acting as show-woman to any beauty, heiress, or stylish girl "of family," so-called, whom she could catch, and in speedily making her over to somebody who had a fine gilded cage to put her into. For the first time in her life, she had now had a peerless beauty and respectable heiress, in one individual, in her hands for the greater part of three months, utterly in vain. With this most remarkable bait on her experienced hook, and with as fine fish in the sea as ever were caught, she had not only caught nothing except a *Tartar*, but had not even to her knowledge had so much as a nibble. She may therefore be excused if, though as usual in the most gracious state of mind towards the fashionable world in general,—Mrs. Ronaldson included,—she was doubly *miffy* where Mrs. Ronaldson's niece was concerned; first, because Constance had given herself airs towards her; secondly, because Constance had given herself airs towards other people. She might have found it hard enough to pardon Constance's dignity. Anybody in her situation might have found it hard enough to pardon Constance's haughtiness, which, if the latter had been ten years younger, would have been called by its proper name, naughtiness.)

Thus, then, Mrs. Ronaldson's compassion was left in the dark. Acting on the scanty hint of the doctor, however, in the spirit of the undoubted originator of homœopathy,—the wise man, in the fine old English ballad, who, having "jumped into a bramble-bush and scratched out both his eyes," on perceiving his loss, at once, with a presence of mind and resource never to be too much commended nor faithfully imitated, and "with all his might and main, jumped into another



bush and scratched them in again,"—she argued that what a ball might cause, a ball might cure, and gave her niece one immediately, at a venture, as a farrier might a bolus to an indisposed cow. Greatly to her satisfaction, her patient seemed not ill-disposed to her remedy; and from that time the good, simple-hearted matron,—a Roman Catholic, and at heart a devotee,—was indefatigable in going out and inviting in, making parties for the theatre and the opera, and accompanying Constance to see every sight and hear every sound, which she thought could possibly give her pleasure.

Constance seemed eager for every novelty or excitement offered her; and if, after trying each, she always parried every chance inquiry as to whether she had enjoyed herself, she was prepared, and answered so adroitly, that her evasions passed unnoticed. Her aunt's anxieties, therefore, were soon at rest. If the young beauty had ever really had anything resting upon her mind, it must, she thought, have been some mere girlish trifle, and have blown away before she could take such interest in gaieties; and the late hours which Constance now kept were quite sufficient to explain her continuing somewhat pale, and sometimes appearing at her light breakfast with swollen eyes. Thus she had her own way, and her grief to herself, to the full.

Her nature had its very good side; though hitherto we have been seeing only the bad; partly because she was showing it particularly at the time when our story begins, and partly because, in spite of our own (Mr. Foxton's and his readers') unusual sweetness of disposition, we could not help,—all of us, North, South, East, and West,—being a good deal out of patience

with her for her suicidal folly, and her ill-treatment of our hero. A soul, higher and deeper than she knew, had lain slumbering and wasting within her ; and now, at the voice of her first womanly sorrow, it woke up, lifted its hollow eyes, and cried day and night within her, with a dreary cry, which her compressed imperial lips would not yet suffer to pass through them, " I am hungry ! I am hungry ! " And when she would have fed it with the best she had,—luxury, admiration, dissipation,—and it rejected them all, she looked into her world, and it was empty ; while the cry arose again yet louder and more drearily, until it seemed to her that she should go mad, " I am hungry ! I am hungry, hungry, hungry ! Feed me, or I shall die ! I am hungry, oh, my God ! " And He who giveth food to the beasts and the young ravens which cry, we may believe, did not disregard the doleful and desperate voice, even though uplifted in repining misery rather than in supplication, for the poor wasted soul was fed with such nourishment as it would receive, if not at first with a rich and plenteous meal. Wise human beings do not treat the starving so ; and the prodigal son must often stoop to eat his husks, before he makes his way home to the full feast of welcome and the fatted calf.

## CHAPTER XI.

## THE ARMORY.

“You think justly, feel rightly,—yes, but your work. Produce it. Men of wealth, men of talent, men of leisure, what are you *doing* in God’s world for God?”

F. W. ROBERTSON.

“And long it was not after, when I was confirmed in this opinion: that he who would not be frustrate of his hope to write well hereafter in laudable things, ought himself to be a true poem; that is, a composition and pattern of the best and honorablest things,—not presuming to sing high praises of heroic men, \* \* \* unless he have in himself the experience and practice of all that which is praiseworthy.”

MILTON.

To LIVE is a verb which implies to do, as well as to be and to suffer. What was Herman doing all this time? Nothing but making speeches, when nobody, in polite parlance, wanted to hear him, and going to parties where nobody wanted to see him? A little. Perhaps we may get an inkling of the nature of his other occupations, by placing ourselves in imagination at the key-hole of the door of Clara’s dining-room,—if we can, in doing so, escape the detection of the unimaginative Patrick, the sentinel spirit who haunts the passage,—and by overhearing one or two conversations therein.

Not long after Herman’s return to Boston, Clara, having been caught out in a shower in a cold November afternoon, sat drying her little boots at a cozy little fire in the grate of the cheerful apartment above-mentioned. Through the open door, she had a vision of Herman driving before him, from the library to his

chamber, a Gummage, loaded to the chin with books, which Herman was guarding from a fall, with his wary arms stretched out on each side of that patient beast of burden. Thereupon Miss Clara, being in want of a little society and chat, called out, "What! More books? Do you think there is any more room left in your head?"

"Yes. I'll come down again in a moment," said he, and vanished, but presently returned, and, ranging a second pair of very unexceptionable boots beside hers on the fender, added, "I am going to study medicine."

"Another profession, besides more arts and sciences than I can count on my fingers? Why, you have got one more than you know what to do with,—have not you?—already. I shall have to call you Mr. Richard Carstone."

"You would have to call me Mrs. Pardiggle, I fear, if I did not. I want a *pied-à-terre* among the poor,—an interest in common with them,—that I may have the right to enter into their houses, and the power to enter into their feelings. It is their interest to be well, and when it is mine to make them so, we shall have a bond of sympathy at once."

"But if you want another profession in order to do good, why not be a clergyman?"

"Frankly, in the first place, because I should not like it; in the second, because, not liking it, I see at a glance dozens of good reasons why I should not do it. A warrior, before he enters the field, should take care, if a choice is left him, to choose armor that fits him. It should not encumber him, nor, on the other hand, cramp him unnecessarily. The gown is too large for me. It needs a man mighty, both morally and intel-

lectually, if not physically, too, in these days, to fill it worthily. I should be lost in it."

"Indeed, I do not see why you should," said Clara, who would have liked to see him in it, more than she ever said; "I think you do yourself great injustice."

"Well, but then it would pinch me here and there intolerably. I want to be a man amongst men. A clergyman is expected to be almost as much tied up in conventionalisms as a woman; and other men treat him as they treat a woman. They are on their guard. They are ashamed to show before women and clergymen how they are not ashamed to talk and act before the Maker of women and clergymen. They exhibit their souls to their pastor, as they do their bodies, chiefly in their Sunday clothes. They seem to him excellent and moral persons. He cannot but believe that the evil reports, which they are now and then candid enough to bring him about one another, are misunderstandings unintentionally exaggerated. Then he must not say his say about popular and public sins, unless his congregation please; or, if he does, he must often be accused,—and he may often fear justly accused,—of alienating them from Religion by alienating them from himself, because they consider him the speaking-tube of Religion. His pocket, too, is in the power of his principles; and this may lead to the suspicion, at least, that his principles are in the power of his pocket."

"But you are independent."

"In fortune, yes;—I have that advantage over most of the clergy;—in mind, I doubt. We are all of us, except the very strongest, obliging enough to take the characters that the opinion of others assigns us. For instance, tell a man that he has lost his temper,



and he generally does lose his temper. Tell a girl that she blushes, and she blushes. These are experiments, of course, that you and I should not try; but we have both of us probably enjoyed the privilege of seeing or *feeling* them, sooner or later. Now, society is to an unfortunately large extent agreed that parsons are of necessity prigs. Unless they are men of much independence of mind, that is enough to make them prigs. It would make me a prig. If they escape the danger of priggishness, they are likely to run into that of boorishness or foppishness. They are called upon 'to define their position' oftener than the member from Bunkum. In short, it must be very hard for them to be manly, dignified, genial, simple, and self-forgetful. Besides, many and many a man has gone into the pulpit against his inclination, from a mistaken sense of duty to that Providence, which manifestly moulded him to fill a different niche, who might have done much more good, or at all events less harm, at a carpenter's bench."

"Do you really think so?"

"I really do. Many a one, who might have been a very worthy Christian, healthful, cheerful, and useful, in the place for which his taste and nature fitted him, making his neighbours like his motives the better because they liked him so well, has been a dull and tedious preacher, making religion seem a mere weariness; or, still worse, a superstitious preacher, helping to make the Word of God of none effect through his traditions; or an unsound, rash, speculating preacher, infecting parish after parish with his own crude vagaries. We are told that the kingdom of heaven is like yeast in flour, which steals through it all, particle by particle, until it is throughout, in every part, *raised*

and *lightened*. Christianity,—so at least it appears to me,—was surely intended to elevate, quicken, and hallow the action of the human mind, in all lawful departments of its action,—art, science, literature, trade, manufactures, &c.,—not to drive conscientious men *en masse* out of all other departments into one. Among these I must think that a strong preference in us for any one, is often an indication of some peculiar power to succeed in that one, and therefore, other things being equal, of the will of Providence that we should pursue that one.”

A third pair of boots, which had been heard gradually approaching through the passage and room, was now added to the row on the fender, supplying the positive degree of comparison, small, to the smaller, and smallest, already perched basking there, like four black-birds on a fence in the sun; as Edward, lazily throwing himself back in his father’s old arm-chair, ejaculated, “What reason the community has to be thankful, that a merciful Providence wasn’t pleased to endow me with a strong preference for picking pockets! I should hold myself bound in conscience to devote myself to it immediately, that it might henceforward be conducted on the highest principles.”

“Try it, and welcome,” said Clara, laughing; “I’ll pay for all you steal. ‘You’re very clever, sir,’ as poor Miss Tuangh said, when we were little and she came to try to give us lessons on the guitar; ‘but you want *entoosms*.’”

Edward yawned, poked the fire, leaned back again in his chair, and—*twiddled* Clara’s golden-beaded purple silk purse between the finger and thumb of one hand, and threw up and caught Herman’s black pocket-book with the other, concluding the performance by

depositing them in his opposition waistcoat-pockets, and saying in a languid tone, "My dear Herman, you can write a draft on Miss Arden, to send to your tailor."

"You have got the laugh against her, to be sure," said Herman; "but against me you have not. *Innocent* occupations were what I was speaking of."

"I have always been impressed with the belief, in the society of the good," rejoined Edward, "that no occupations were innocent, theoretically considered, for which I had a vocation. I thought you said useful. Usefulness is, in the judgment of a practical man, a far higher virtue than innocence; and this pursuit of pocket-picking is in the highest degree a profitable occupation,—to the pickpocket. Let us see." He pulled out again the purse and the pocket-book. He slipped together the gold rings of the former, and explored its recesses with one long, white middle-finger. "In Clara's, an eagle at this end; and in this, four silver quarters of a dollar, and four three-cent pieces,—tokens of her guileless disposition,—which she took in change, I would wager my head, in full faith that they were four gold dollars. Herman's;"—he unclasped it,—"better still; a lead-pencil, inspired, no doubt,—a toothpick, adapted to be used as a harmless provocative in the intervals of inspiration, and—oh, great Apollo! look at the poetry!—What a bargain I shall drive with Putnam! And now that I've got the pencil, I can write nobody knows how much more with it, and sell it when I've done as a literary relic, secondary only in importance to Dr. Goldsmith's wig. But, in the first place, let me see whether these effusions can be read; and, in the second place, let me see whether they can be understood. May I?"

“ ‘Try it,’ as Clara said ; I’ll make you welcome to all you will make out. ‘You’re very clever, sir,’ &c.”

“It does look a little Pindaric, to be sure. However,

“ ‘As home to the homesick,  
As rest to the weary,  
As land to the shipwrecked,  
As death to despair !’

Rhythm unexceptionable ; but what got the rhyme ? It must have fallen out with itself when I tossed up the pocket-book. Patrick will pick it up before breakfast to-morrow morning, perhaps, when he sweeps the carpet.

“ ‘Aurora, Musis amica.’

I have noticed that he is often tuneful at such seasons, inspired, I suppose, by the soft cadence of the straws in his broom, just as our other household minstrel is, by the measured, murmurous rustle of the reeds around Castalia’s fountain. The poetical pocket-book proceeds :

“ ‘The turf grows smooth and green once more,  
From whence the tree was torn ;  
But doth the summer shade therefore,  
And song of birds, return ?’

A little want of logical sequence observable, perhaps ; but, to make amends for it, we find here an interesting token of the progress of the art of poesy, in the super-inducement of rhyme, imperfect, indeed, and rude as yet, but full of promise for the future. The awakening of a spirit of scientific inquiry is also to be remarked, in the last two lines. Lest the poet himself should not possess sylvan information sufficient to set at rest the anxious doubt, which he excites in the minds of his

readers, I will state in a little annotation on the margin, that if the tree whose untimely deracination he deplored was an oak, a pine will probably spring up in its room,—or, if it was a pine, an oak. Thus its place will be refilled, if not by one thing, by another; and the soil meanwhile gets the benefit of a rotation of crops.”

“Thank you for a happy idea,” said Herman.

“You are extremely welcome. To continue:

“ ‘The twittering nests ’mid whispering leaves,  
The boughs, return no more;  
And time may heal the heart that grieves,  
But scarce its bliss restore.’ ”

Herman’s cheeks glowed under this infliction, like those of an Indian at the stake; but he bore it like one. Clara pitied him, and came to the rescue.

“Come, Ned,” said she, “*I* want the pocket-book.”

“What will you give me for it? Remember, I have scarcely as yet begun my examination of it. We are, as it were, selling and buying an unexplored tract in California. You must pay me a handsome premium on its possibilities.”

“A three-cent piece?—A quarter of a dollar?—The eagle?”

“No; I am above mercenary considerations; and besides, I’ve got them already.”

“Extortioner! What will you have, then?—a tune on the piano?”

“Yes; but I can always get that gratis. Who thinks of paying for the air he breathes? I retort your reproach. Who but an extortioner would think of making me pay for the air I hear? Will you tell me what you two had been discussing before I came in?”



"If you will let Herman have the pocket-book."

"And go on with the discussion, just as if I were not here?"

"If you will not interrupt and make fun of us,—if you will let me have the purse."

"There then. Now then."

"Herman was abusing the clerical profession."

"Very good. Let us hear. All fair in war. They abuse us to their hearts' content, every Sunday. Why shouldn't we take our revenge on a week-day?"

"I was abusing, not the members of the profession, but the inconveniences and restrictions of it. Clara was asking me why I did not enter it."

"Clara, I shall be obliged to lock you up. It would never do, in the world, for a fellow of his temperament!"

"And I was telling her that I did not incline to do so, and why, not inclining, I did not see that I ought. I don't know whereabouts we were, exactly, when we left off; but I'll begin again here, at any rate. A good example, or I am much mistaken, often loses half its effect by being set by a person whose setting it is taken as quite a matter of course, and all in the way of his business. There seems to have been a convenient division of labor between many congregations and their pastors, like that between many wives and their husbands. 'Be good for us,' virtually but not virtuously, says the congregation, 'and we'll be rich for you.' Thus the good example and precepts of their clergymen are too apt to look like parts of financial transactions, to the very men whose minds most need to be turned, by his precepts and example, from their too exclusive devotion to financial transactions. They think he is good for so much a year, just as they are busy for so

much a year. You will ask me, I dare say, now, what reason I have to take it for granted, that I am going to set a good example at all, in orders or out.”—

“No, I shan’t,” said Edward. “All precedent confirms the depressing idea. But I must ask you how you can answer it to your conscience, that you persist in setting the example to a person of so persistent unimprovableness as myself. Have you no fear of increasing my culpabilities by my opportunities?”

“Not I. That’s your affair. I can trust you to take care of yourself. I suspect your worst sin is, pretending to be sinful. A less tasteful kind of hypocrisy, by the way, Mr. Ned, than the common kind. That is said, you know, to be ‘the homage which Vice pays to Virtue;’ but yours is the homage which Virtue pays to Vice. However, I have no fear of hurting anybody in that way, at least. I don’t take it for granted, at all, that I am going to set a good example; but if I am not, I have no right to go into the pulpit; and if I am, I believe that I need not go into the pulpit. I believe that I,—observe, I don’t say everybody, but *I*,—can do more good out of it than in it. The *stampede* of conscientious men, as a matter of course, into it, must be attended, I think, with this great disadvantage, among others; if all conscientious men are to be expected to go into the pulpit, the converse of the proposition will be practically taken for granted: namely, men who don’t go into the pulpit are not to be expected to be conscientious. God makes the priest, as much as He makes the poet. If the priesthood,—no, I doubt whether that word belongs to the new covenant; it is obsolete,—if the *ministry* is a man’s vocation, let him take it and thank God, for it is the highest; but, if I know myself, it is not mine. The church wants such God-

anointed leaders, God knows, to fill her highest places, in these half-deistical, half-superstitious days; but we cannot all fill the highest places; and she wants Christian laymen, too, ready to carry out fearlessly and freely into practice, what her Christian preachers preach, and to show, as her preachers cannot, how perfect soever their practice may be, that no such apology as a black coat is needed for saying Christian,—I don't mean canting,—words, and doing Christian deeds."

There was a pause; and Clara filled it by saying, "Herman was telling me, that he thought of studying medicine."

"Was he?" said Edward. "I noticed in passing something of a gap in my shelves. I supposed he had run away with the contents, merely with the intention of filling up a corresponding space in his *cours de littérature universelle*. Do you really mean to practise?"

"If I can get a chance. Dr. Brodie tells me that he can make me useful immediately, as a sort of half-assistant among his poor patients."

"Shall you practise only among the poor?"

"That's as it may prove hereafter. I shall go where I'm wanted;—if the rich send for me, to the rich; if the poor, to the poor. If both, perhaps I shall find it convenient to be a sort of medical Robin Hood, and take from the one what I give to the other."

"How long have you thought of it?"

"Ever since I saw the inflamed eyes of the poor Indians, I believe. Ever since we came on a poor, forsaken Sioux girl, on the prairies, I am sure. Didn't I write? No, I had no chance at that time to send a letter. It was a very hard case. A pretty creature she was, of sixteen or eighteen, and seemed, from her

dress, to be a person of condition. She had on leggings of fine scarlet cloth, richly ornamented, and was wrapped in two superb buffalo robes, which were beautifully embroidered with porcupines' quills, as were a pair of new moccasins which she had on, besides. She was lying beside a perfect encampment of the dead,—of dead-lodges, so-called. Nine Sioux were decomposing in theirs, at a little distance,—to her extreme *discomposure*, one would have thought,—lying in state in their buffalo-skins, with their saddles, spears, camp-kettles, and accoutrements, piled around them. They had all died of the cholera; and her savage friends, afraid to wait for her to follow their example, had paid her the agreeable attention of laying her out beforehand, with all these pretty things, I suppose, to reconcile her to the arrangement, in the spirit of the Frenchman, who promised to design for an elderly and decrepit gentleman a monument so exquisite that it would be enough to give one '*envie de mourir*.' Then they had all run away and left her. She opened her eyes and looked at us; and I hope, that it was some comfort to her to see living faces around her as she died. But I thought, then, how gladly I'd have given all my knowledge, such as it was, for a little of yours."

"You have never thought of practising law?"

"No, I don't believe I ever did much in earnest. I liked the study, and had a vague notion of its being a stepping-stone for me into public life,"—

"Which your *Free-Soilism* has knocked in the head, hey?"

"I don't want an employment to show me only the worst side of men; I am getting cynical enough, in spite of myself, without it, in all conscience. A man

has no business to stand aside with his hands in his pockets, abusing the world for being so bad, before he has done anything in the world to make it better. I want active, social, regular, benevolent, in a manner compulsory, occupation. I feel myself strongly attracted to your profession. What do you think of my going into it, Ned?"

Herman asked this question with some anxiety; for Edward was thought, by those who knew him best, to have a large stock of sound common-sense and sagacity, which he generously put into a charity-fund, and reserved it exclusively for the use of his neighbours. Edward raised himself in his chair, sat judicially upright, and considered.

"Well, I believe it may be a very good plan, if you follow it up in moderation. You're in magnificent health now; but you must remember that you've probably inherited from your—ahem!—parents, a nervous system that mustn't be trifled with."

"Let my nervous system alone, you sir; and don't talk *shop*. I rather think, all that must have altered since I was a child. At Cassei's they call me the strongest man of my height and weight in Boston."

"No!—do they?—So far, so good. Then you have only got to mind that you keep yourself so. It won't do, for instance, for you to study from starlight to starlight six days in the week, and sit up with sick emigrants six nights."

"I'll take care."

"If you will, I cannot see why you shouldn't do very well. You're just the inexplicable sort of person to like practising medicine; and Clara and I are just the inexplicable sort of persons to like having you,—aren't we, my Psyche?—if we should ever be foolish



enough to get sick, which we don't mean to do on this side of ninety. Your chemistry, Latin, and Greek, are no bad stock in trade to begin with, nor your modern languages, either, among foreigners. Pity the Erse isn't among them; but you might take a few lessons of the golden-mouthed Gummage! And it's no bad thing for a poor, but practical, philanthropist, to have some advice that people are ready to take, to give away, beside all his money, which he needs for himself."

In Herman's opinion, he by no means needed all his money for himself. By his father's will, he had his lodging given him until he should marry; and, by his brother's and sister's will, all his other household expenses. His yearly income was about three thousand dollars. He had determined to make one-third of this suffice him for clothes and pocket-money; to invest one-third to meet possible unexpected demands upon him in the future; and to bestow the rest in charity. Of the latter, two hundred dollars were to go annually to one of two missionaries, whom he had engaged to go out to his Indian friends.

He had not forgotten them, but had made it his first business on his return to find some vigorous, sensible, and kindly young man, who had enough of the apostolic spirit to give his time and teaching to them zealously, in return for a living. It fell out beyond his hopes that, by a very happy chance or providence, his friend Dr. Lovel was able to point out to him not one, but two, just such as he wanted, young theological graduates and friends, whose large frames, developed at the plough and anvil, had proved unable to bear the change to the sedentary life of the clergyman of a parish, and who were on the point, to their great regret, of abandoning

their profession for some more active and airy occupation. They were able and eager to teach their rude converts enough of farming and house-building to keep them out of mischief through the week, and on a Sunday to talk to them, simply, plainly, and devoutly, of God, His Son, and His will, to administer reverently all holy rites, and to do their best by precept and example to build up in the hearts of our red neighbours a new little chapel in the wide church of Christ. They were already making their preparations to depart together for the wilderness, with the alacrity of a pair of Xaviers or John Eliots, Herman agreeing to provide in part for the support of one of them, and Clara for that of the other, for the present, until they should have had time to settle, and provide for, themselves.

"You ought to be laying up something," continued the young old bachelor; "you'll want to be married and settled by and by."

Herman said nothing to this, which Edward thought a bad sign. Clara said, "Oh!" for Patrick had lighted the gas, and revealed Mr. Flint, who must have been sitting there in the dark behind them, and listening to their conversation, nobody knew how long. Being discovered, he emitted a chuckle, half-propitiatory, half-congratulatory, and came forward rubbing his hands with satisfaction at the success of his graceful and agreeable trick.

"Found your front-door on the jar," said he, "and slid in jest for to show ye how easy a burglar might. Glad to hear a little profitable conversation. Doctor, there was some sense in what *you* was a-sayin' of. It's time Herman here was a-doin' somethin'. It don't never pay for young fellers to be idle."

Edward, who did not gratefully appreciate either

his brother-in-law's pleasantries or his approbation, bowed rather stiffly, presently said something of "a little business to attend to above-stairs," and walked off to the last number of "The Newcomes" and a cigar. (He had once brought one into the parlour, when Mr. Flint stayed too long, but only once. That was a joke, which Mr. Flint in his turn did not appreciate;—for tobacco made him sick; and it drove him off;—nor did Clara. It was of no use for Edward to endeavour to explain to her, as humbly as learnedly, that he perpetrated it only in conformity to the custom of the polished ancients, who always burned perfume before their guests, when it was time for them to depart. She was within an inch of being angry with him,—nearer than she had been since the days when they were contending rivals in the nursery for the attentions of "Nurse,"—and she followed up the rebuke of her countenance,

"Severe in youthful beauty,"

by a little speech to the effect, that it was the only ungentlemanlike thing she had ever known him to do in his life. Dr. Arden was speedily brought to repentance, and never relapsed.)

"Charity's a good thing in its time an place, Herman," continued the voice of the charmer; "but you're young yet; an I can tell ye it had ought to begin to home, an be kep there, too, a consider'ble spell, afore it's let out. You come down to my store jest as soon as ye like, and fetch whatever you choose in your pus, an I'll put ye in the way to double an thrible it. That's a fair offer, ain't it, Clary? I've got a stool an desk all ready for ye; an I an Steel want a young gent like you, that can read an write French an Spanish, an them li-t-goes, pretty bad jest now. You look out for number one

in the fust place, get rich, an live all respectable an comfortable. Hold on to your money while ye want it, and as long as ye can. When you're done with it, 't'll do jest as much good as ever to other people. Jest you make a will, an leave a lot on it, you know, to the missionaries, or some divinity-school or benevolent institution, to pay the insurance on your soul, you know. That's the way I do business. That's my notion of charity."

"But suppose, Mr. Flint, you should fail—"

"Good gracious, sir!" exclaimed Mr. Flint, starting to his feet, "what do you mean?"

"Why, not succeed in your business,—not become rich."

"Good gracious, sir! I'll trouble you to be more guarded in your expressions. I'm not generally nervous, but really! The credit of a business man,—an honest man! I hope your help isn't in the pantry. I hope nobody heard."

"No, no. There's nobody there."

"If it isn't disagreeable, I'll shut the door."

"I'll shut it myself. I beg your pardon for using so unlucky an expression."

"It was a very equivocal expression, Herman, I beg leave to observe. Anything that suggests the idea of insolvency!—might bring a run upon me directly! You'll be more prudent, though, in my office?"

"If I possibly can," said Herman, a little maliciously, "if I decide on accepting your kind offer. But suppose you should not succeed in your plans,—not become rich at all, or earn a good deal of money and lose it before you died, without becoming bankrupt?"

"Well, sir, I guess 'twouldn't be long afore I died, anyhow. I'll trouble you to discontinoo the subject."

"Yes; but, Mr. Flint, suppose I fail,"—

"Nothing more likely, I should think, sir," interrupted Mr. Flint, grinning rather wickedly.

"In the charitable plans, I mean, which you were so good as to attribute to me. That would be other people's loss, not mine, wouldn't it? Did you ever know a man die of grief for the losses of his neighbours? Don't you think I should stand it?"

Mr. Flint smiled again rather more amicably, and agreed that there might be "some sense in that 'ere voo;" and Herman, whose well-bred conscience pricked him a little for his pertinacity, thanked him so heartily for his generous offers, that he completely mollified him. Mr. Flint went on:

"Well, go on your own hook, and welcome; but whatever ye do, don't be poor. Keep clear o' that, anyhow. It's about the wust thing in the world; an nobody knows how awful 'tis that hain't tried it. There was my granmother. Poor old lady! she died to the poor-house. She took care o' me, and kep on her limbs as long as she could; but she got too old to do anythin to support herself; and so they put her in there, an bound me prentice to a dairy-farmer. Well, I took on terribly about it, by myself, up in the barn-chamber; but I dursn't go near her for a month, for fear o' the other boys pokin fun at me about havin a relative in such a place; but she took sick with lonesomeness and what-not; an when I heard o' that, I jest cut an run there. But her intellect was a good deal affected; an when she see me, an knoo 'twas somebody that was kind to her, she jest put out her claw of a hand and said, 'Roathted apple.' Her teeth was poor; an I s'pose she couldn't eat what they give her. Well, I told 'em what she wanted, and begged 'em to give her one; but 'twas early in the fall; an I s'pose apples



wa'n't very reasonable yet; an they said they hadn't got none. I was a tender-hearted little fellow then, jest like my son Thomas."

["No, you were not, then nor ever!" indignantly, but internally, remarked Miss Arden.]

"I cried an run right off to a man that had a orchard nigh there, an told him if he'd let me have a dozen of his great red Baldwins for granny, I'd bring his cow to and from pasture with our'n every day and night for a month. My mouth had watered for 'em many a time, an I might ha' stole 'em easy enough; but that never warn't my way. Honesty's the best policy. We struck the bargain; but don't you think the stingy old codger wouldn't trust me with one aforehand! 'Drive the cow safe a week fust, an then come for your fust three apples, an so on,' says he. 'Granny'll be dead!' says I. 'Granny's granson won't,' says he; 'better speak out, an tell truth, and say you want 'em to eat yourself,' says he. 'We all know Squire Scrouge keeps you pretty short;' an then he an his men set up a haw-haw, an I run off boo-hoo in harder than ever; an I went stompin my feet many a time to an from pasture, to think how she might be a-dyin, an I couldn't go near her for want of a apple!"

"What a shame!" cried Clara.

"What a disgraceful shame!" cried Herman.

"Yes, wa'n't it? And to think how I might be a-drivin his plaguey old cow for nothin, too, all the time! I wa'nt, though. That wa'n't never my luck. Wednesday come round again; an I went and got my apples, an picked up sticks out in the woods, an lighted 'em with a match I'd been treasurin up, that I'd found in the road, an roasted my apples, an carried 'em to her all bobbin hot on a twine. I never see anythin

eat like her; an the other old grannies come round an looked on, an mumped with their chins as ef they wished they'd had somethin to mump for. She lived to eat 'em all but three. When I brought them, she wast jest a-dyin, an couldn't take no notice. I couldn't touch 'em. They'd ha' stuck in my throat. I went an sold 'em for six cents; an them six cents was the nest-egg of all I'm wuth now. I walked into the city the fust chance I could get, an bought half a dozen slate-pencils with 'em an traded 'em off with the boys around for nine-pence; and so on from that time, I've always gone to bed Saturday night richer than I got up Monday morning; for I vowed, when I stood by poor old granny's shabby old shell of a second-hand coffin, that *I* wouldn't die poor, or I'd know why."

He wiped his eyes; and Clara pitied him so much, that she asked him to stay to tea. It was a case of virtue rewarded, for he "guessed he'd got to go home, an look over his accounts." Herman attended him to the door, precisely like a very good brother-in-law, and came back in a state of contrition.

"How much better we might think of almost all persons we dislike, if we knew them better!" said Clara.

"The very thing I had in my mind. We see men's faults, but not the excuses for them. If mankind had dealt more generously by little Jonathan, Mr. Flint might deal more generously by mankind. As it is, how honest he is!"

"In spite of the Coolies?" said Clara, archly.

"Well, as honest as a man can be, who lets his neighbours keep his conscience for him: I shall let him have all my savings to take care of, taking due care myself that they are not invested in Coolies; and

I shall not turn up the nose of the disrespectful at his offers of patronage and fortune. He wished to give me the best he knew. Knowing what he told us, who can wonder at his having a morbid horror of poverty? Besides, a man who has a family, ought to endeavour to make a proper provision for a family."

Clara did not say, "You may have a family;" for, when Edward suggested it, she had noticed Herman's silence, and divined with gentle-womanly tact that his wounds were still too fresh to be touched. At any rate, the profession upon which he wished to enter would be of itself a provision for the possible wants of the future. He continued: "To go from particulars to generals, I think there is some injustice in the general sneer against the dollar-hunting of New England and the Middle States, as there is in most indiscriminating sneers. People despise others for struggling for things which *they* do not struggle for, merely because they already have them. There is as much jealousy on one side as there is envy on the other. Take from a British nobleman his title and entailed estates, and from a Southern planter his negroes and plantation, and if they do not presently set themselves to work, as hard as we, to help themselves, by hook or by crook, to the comforts, elegances, and luxuries of life, and to a position in society, it will probably be not because they are more unworldly than we, but because they are more unenterprising and lazy. But, on the other hand, there is a frightfully common tendency among us to seek things, in themselves good or harmless, in a bad or dangerous way. I do not see that the New Testament forbids us to make Mammon serve us; but it does tell us that we cannot serve God and Mammon; and we do serve Mammon. Where so

many bow down, perhaps the counterpoise of the community may best be restored by some few leaning backward. It is the privilege of young men situated like me, for instance, with health, competence, and leisure, to be able to do this ;—among a community, almost all of whom do, and most of whom must, work hard for money, to work as hard, but *not* for money,—for something better than money,—to carry out literally the apostle's direction, ' Let no man seek his own, but another's wealth,' as we have it in our rather intensified version. The more literally we can carry out such precepts, the better for us, it seems to me, each and all. Perhaps this, in its fulness, is one of those precepts which not all men can receive, but those to whom it is given ; but I have a very deeply strong impression, that it is given at least to me. In all my tastes, circumstances, and condition, within and without, I see as it were the workings of the gloved hand of Providence, pointing and beckoning me to this line of life."

" Are you tired of my questions ?"

" Never."

" When Edward came in, I was just going to ask you whether you did not think your love of art and literature showed that you might find pleasure and a pursuit in one of those directions ?"

" Pleasure, no doubt. A pursuit such as I need just now ? *I* doubt. Take care of the duties, and the pleasures will take care of themselves, I believe will be the best maxim for me, while my habits for mature life are forming, particularly since I have spent all my past life for myself."

" But not lost it, surely, Herman, for yourself or for others. You have been fitting yourself for usefulness,—feeding and developing your mind,—sharpening your tools."

“Sharpening and pointing the weapon of self-indulgence, I fear, against myself, among the rest. However, ‘Let the dead past bury its dead,’ and let me ‘act; act in the living present.’ All men can act well. Few can write, carve, or paint well. On our death-beds, the question which we shall ask with most anxiety, of those who would cheer and encourage us, will be, not whether men praise us, but whether Christ will. At the judgment-seat, the question which we shall ask ourselves, and expect, and prepare to answer, with most solicitude, will be, not what we have written, carved, or painted, but what we have done. A fellow-soul rescued from Satan, is a poem for an angel’s reading.”

“Oh, Herman, indeed, some paintings and poems are deeds, in the best and noblest sense of the word! Are they not? You would call it a great and good deed, I am sure, to preach some sermons; but did you ever hear a sermon which did more to rescue your soul from thoughtlessness and worldliness than Retszch’s ‘Chess-Player,’ or the ‘Christus Remunerator?’ or that helped to fill you with more religious courage and heroism than Mr. Longfellow’s ‘Psalm of Life,’ or more Christian trust than his ‘Resignation,’ or than some of Mrs. Browning’s ‘Lines on Cowper’s Grave?’”

“True, love; I have shifted my ground, I see; and you have taken up your position on that which I started from. I surrender. If I could, day by day, paint such pictures, or write such poems, I should think that I was doing my part, and my appropriate part, for mankind; and that I had earned a right, perhaps, in ordinary circumstances, to give the mere remnants of my leisure to so-called charities. The preacher by profession may be too often left to dance alone to his own piping, while even the imme-



diate bystanders content themselves with listening or looking on ; but the great Christian author or artist is a trumpeter whose notes are heard over the civilized world. It can hardly be, one would think, but that, among so many listeners, many will be found to march to such music. But I am neither Mr. Longfellow, Mrs. Browning, nor Scheffer. For painting and sculpture I have some talent, I believe,—I don't mean to undervalue myself,—but not a spark of genius. Now talent is very good for good common every-day work in the world, but good for nothing in the *studio*."

"But I enjoy some of your verses,—perhaps I had better not say how much. You do not like flattery; I do not like vanity."—

"Because I wrote them, Psyche?"

"Yes; because you wrote them *so*."

"My verses. I have hoped myself, sometimes, when I have heard you read them, that there might be something in them. But it is not every day, nor every week, nor month even, that I can write anything that even you or I should think worth reading; and I find little breadth or richness in my poetical vein just now. One should live, and think, and feel much,—and suffer much, too, perhaps, if God has appointed suffering for him,—before one should write much. If I made it my way of life now to go into my room every morning to write, it would soon change into my going there every morning to muse, and finally to read and doze,—a mere literary *dilettante*. I should empty into two or three compositions the crude accumulations of my boyhood and youth; have nothing left, and write nothing, or, still worse, nonsense or namby-pamby; for men who write at all times because they will, instead of sometimes because they must, must often write falsely and feebly.

Then, feeling that I had staked my all upon a cast, would of itself be enough to make my hand shake. In my anxiety lest I should fail, I should lose the calmness and self-possession essential to high success. My life wants at least two strings to its bow. I believe that one may write the better for having worked, and work the better for having written. At any rate, to make one single poem live, the life-blood of lively living years should be drained into it."

"Poems are vampires, then, and that is the reason why you are sometimes so pale when you have been writing. Write no more, then. You may give up poetry."

"Never, till poetry gives up me, and that I trust will be only when life does,—nor even then, or I should be unsatisfied with heaven. But I think that the best poetry is oftenest that which follows up a man in the midst of affairs and forces him to write it, not that which he follows up apart from affairs, and forces himself to write; it is the foam which rises from a working life; the one is to the other as the rainbowed wreaths of spray of Niagara to a bowl of soap-suds, which a child puffs up into bubbles with his own breath through a tobacco-pipe. Few men are strong enough to write to purpose, who are not also strong enough to work and wait."

"And you think that your work is not,—cannot be,—in the ministry?" said Clara, recurring fondly to her first idea. "Oh, Herman, how I should love to hear you preach!"

"So you shall, whenever you please," said he, smiling; "and so shall other people, whenever they please and I please. I *will* be a minister, God willing; I like the good, humble, old-fashioned word. I wish

to try to carry the word of God into the houses of those who will not, or who cannot, go into the house of God to seek it. I have heard, and I suspect it is true, that many or most of those who hold pews in our churches are so well instructed in their religion already, if that were all, that they could at need preach edifyingly enough to their preachers; so that, if they do not do their duty, the difficulty is not that they do not know it, but that they do not choose it. That is a difficulty which I must leave to the grace of God to conquer. I wish to seek, and if I can, save some of those who are lost, who do not know the way, who are bewildered,—to whom, as I have also heard, God is known as a being less horrible than Satan, chiefly in this: that the One can sometimes be permanently propitiated, and the other not. I wish to go to them, so far as an uninspired man may, as the apostles did, comforting and healing, as well as teaching. If I can do their bodies good, they may, for gratitude's sake, let me do what I can for their souls; and then I will try to make them the better citizens, better men, better Christians, for my having lived beside them. Those who seek the preacher least are probably those who need him most; but the clergy cannot do everything, and should not have everything left to them to do. I believe, as I have hinted before, that it is much easier for a layman than for a clergyman, *to get at* a very large class of his fellow-men. A clergyman stands a little apart from them, and speaks to them from above. A physician stands at their side, knows where their hearts are, and can speak to them if he will. Moreover, my Psyche, to end where we began, selfish men,—and most men are selfish,—are most likely to do their duty when it falls in with their inclination: my inclina-

tion draws me very strongly to the profession of medicine ; and therefore,"——

Herman went to work, and to work that on the whole suited him. He grew more cheerful, though not gay. He soon found that the good solid wheat, "the marrow of men," was not taken out of his bread of life, if the spice and sweetness were. He was now in the condition of some nice little boy, who, having seen a plum-cake borne by him on its way to the oven, and fully expected to banquet thereon, finds himself abruptly set down to bread and milk instead, with an order to eat it up, and then go to sleep. Bread and milk is nutritious. It is not altogether unpalatable. Yet one would hardly require him to smack his lips over it. If he makes no wry faces, he does pretty well. Herman did not smack his lips ; but, on the other hand, he took what was given him patiently, and made no wry faces.

If his life was no longer set to music, at least he marched on without it, without flagging ; and some of the poetry, that he did not write, he acted. But this one poem must have been written not very far from that time. I found it, a few weeks ago, in his hymn-book and his hand-writing, in the family pew of the Ardens at King's Chapel. It appeared to have been written at a heat. For once Herman could not have been very attentive to the sermon.

Perhaps few Christians could in that place, on the black spring-day of which the verses bore the date ; when, not many rods off from the old stronghold of Freedom, a Boston court-house was degraded into a slave-pen, and when our once high-hearted old town, half reënnobled, even in her avaricious and outwitted dotage, by her too late-roused indignation, sat shaking in the dust in chains of her elder sons' forging, while

her younger ones, marching in arms round about her, pointed their weapons at her heart to keep down her impotent rising.

FANEUIL HALL\*.

“Εἰ γὰρ τόδ’ ἔσται,  
Οὐκ οἶδ’ Αθήνας τάσδ’ ἐλευθέρας ἔτι.  
’Αλλ’ οἶδ’ ἐγὼ τὸ τῶνδε λῆμα καὶ φύσιν\*  
Θνήσκειν θελήσουσ’· ἡ γὰρ αἰσχύνῃ πάρος  
Τοῦ ζῆν παρ’ ἐσθλοῖς ἀνδράσιν νομίζεται.”

EURIPIDES.

Ho, here! my sturdy brothers, from the college and the forge,  
Come up as came your forefathers to blunt the tools of George!  
Swifter, easier, than their cart-horses, from Berkshire’s summits far  
And the shores of sandy Plymouth, flies for you the panting car.  
Leave your hali-bought stock uncheapened, and unsold your slaughtered flock;

And quench the match just lighted in the gray, old granite rock.  
Leave the hungry cod unbaited in the waters blue and still,  
And hither steer your *dories* by the shaft of Bunker Hill.  
Where Lexington’s moist clover twinkles in the morning light,  
And Dorchester’s gay butter-cups dance on her storied height,  
Let your ploughs stick in the furrows,—smoke your hay-cocks in the sun;—

Here are fetters to unrivet! Freedom’s work is to be done!  
With eager and with gallant hearts obey the welcome call;  
For a suppliant covers trembling ’neath the eaves of Faneuil Hall.

Rejoice, thou trembling fugitive. Were hell-hounds on thy track,  
Not from these sacred precincts had they power to drag thee back.  
Our three-hilled city owns no rule save that of equal laws.  
Approach her grand tribunal, and securely plead thy cause.  
What! Why? Condemn the guiltless? Away with all your fears!  
He asks but justice. Try him, by a jury of his peers.—  
There is no room for them. The court with Slavery’s slaves is filled.  
Are you mad? Speak low. Look round you. Be your reckless  
brawlings stilled;

For the shadows, and the footsteps, of hireling soldiers fall  
On shackled Justice’s threshold, in the shade of Faneuil Hall.—

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\* The reader who would not be more nice than wise, may save himself some trouble with these lines, if he will drop the new-fangled dactylic pronunciation of *Fan-you-will*,—supposing him so unfortunate as to have ever adopted it,—and content himself, as Peter of the name was probably obliged to, with simple “Fan’il.”



Rejoice thee yet, thou fugitive! Behold these free-born bands.  
 The swords of patriot ancestors are glittering in their hands;  
 And heroes' blood, that throbbed of yore for Freedom and the right,  
 Swells in their veins; and tyrants must fly blasted at the sight,  
 And leave thee free as heaven's own air around yon hallowed wall  
 In Freedom's oracles of yore breathed forth from Faneuil Hall!

Hope not in them, poor fellow-slave; their aid is not for thee.  
 The steel they bear is chains they wear,—the chains of Tyranny.  
 Fall back, ye hapless recreants!—into your grandsires' graves;  
 Their clapboard ribs, if empty now, ne'er held the hearts of slaves;—  
 Go, with your snorings wake them from their rest well-earned and  
 deep;

For Liberty's old Cradle has rocked all their young to sleep!  
 Oh, monument of Glory dead, to shapeless ruin fall,  
 Nor mock us with thy memories, polluted Faneuil Hall!

Farewell, our country's cuckoo-brood,—the brood of Sloth and  
 Gold!—

Our country's true-born, to the front! Her cobwebbed flags unfold.  
 Oh God of love, unserved too long, with changing mien art Thou,  
 The awful God of battles, our only helper now?  
 Leap forth then clad with lightnings, from Thy black and bellowing  
 cloud.

With Thy forgotten thunders appal the craven crowd.  
 Our lives, our youth, our manhood, we immolate to Thee.  
 Take all, dread God; but save our sons our birthright, liberty.  
 As the seed of better ages our martyred forms shall fall.  
 Our names shall be the household words for aye of Faneuil Hall.

In Thine unerring balance our wavering counsels weigh  
 For strife or peace, oh God of grace, this dark and evil day.  
 Be Thou our Light,—our Leader!—Prompt Thou our unlearned parts.  
 We are men, and blind and erring, but with brave and loyal hearts.  
 Choose Thou the way. We follow on the green or crimson path,  
 Through the lanes of Peace and Plenty or the fire-sown road of  
 Wrath.

As Freedom's champions let us live,—her stainless champions lie,  
 And in our blest and honored graves in happy slumbers lie,  
 Where, through the stillness e'en of death, twill reach our half-roused  
 ear.

When Freedom's voice is raised once more, and shouting freemen  
 hear,

As he, who to her portal fled a fearful chattel thrall,  
 Hangs up his shattered fetters o'er the gates of Faneuil Hall.

## CHAPTER XII.

## THE KNIGHT IN THE CAMP.

“Earth feels new scythes upon her.  
 We reap our brothers for the wains,  
 And call the harvest honor.—  
 Draw face to face, front line to line,  
 One image all inherit,—  
 Then kill, curse on, by that same sign,  
 Clay, clay,—and spirit, spirit.”

E. B. BROWNING.

“Madam, no.  
 I have done nothing; if a wrong there be,  
 It lies with others; I have but obeyed  
 Whom I am bound to serve.”

“Alas! thy guilt  
 Is but more abject, being ministrant  
 Unto another's, and thyself no less  
 Accountable to heaven.”

TAYLOR.

HERMAN in due time took his degree of Doctor of Medicine; and then, being by that time in some need of rest and recreation, he took a journey with a three-fold motive thereto: he wanted to see Kansas, a place of which we all hear so much and know so little; he had an old schoolmate ill in the army there; and a kind new friend of his, his schoolmate's mother, was very unhappy about her son, and anxious to have him resign and come home, on more accounts than one. Herman left his emigrant fellow-travellers at the little cluster of wooden, mud, and thatched houses, which has since made so much noise in the world under the

name of Lawrence. But, as he rode on over the purple and golden flowers of the quiet prairie, his ears still, for an hour or two after, seemed to ring with the words which he had left behind, ringing through the streets of that busy little town :

“ Anticipate I’ll have much difficulty in locating a site, sir ?”

“ Wall, I don’t, mum.”

“ Want to sell your claim, strannger ?”

“ Wall, I don’t know. How much do ye want to give ?”

“ Reeder,”—

“ Whitfield,”—

“ Stringfellow,”—

“ How’d the voting go, up to Hobanob Precinct ? You was present, sir, I presume.”

“ Well, pretty much as it did down to Bugaboo, sir ; judges disagreed. Biggs and Sharp, Pro-Slavery, they thought best to let the Ruffians vote without swearin. Blunt, Free-State, he dissented. The Ruffians got some leavers, an pried up the cabin an let it down again some two or three times ; an Blunt, he attempted to abstract the ballot-box an quit the premises ; but old man Firetur, of Mizzoura, accompanied with his two sons, encountered him to the back entrance, an put a pistol to his vest ; an says he, ‘ You better return an deposit that there box, or one or the other on us will land in hell,’ says he,—‘ or eternity,’ I forgit which.—Never mind. It’s all the same.”

“ Well, yes, sir ; I guess it was in that case about synonymous. Purceed.”

“ ‘ Drop it,’ says Raymond Firetur, a-perducin a revolver, ‘ or I’ll put sixteen through ye.’ So Blunt he jest dropped it an resigned, like a desperate mean-

spirited feller as he is; and they elected old man Firetur judge, in lieu of him; an he an the other Pro-Slaveries, they let all the Ruffians vote themselves, an put down lots of other individooals that wa'n't there besides,—Israel Putnam, an Ben Franklin, an George Washington, Colonel Freemont, Sam Slick, Mr. Garrison, an cetra.—They got the returns to mount up to four hunderd an up'ards; an report says there ain't more'n one-twenty legal voters in that whole precinct."

Then these echoes died out, chased away into the distance by the sweet voices of the birds, and the muffled patting of Herman's horse's hoofs upon the turf. He enjoyed the charms of solitude thoroughly, after days spent in cars, steamboats, and inns, but had had enough of it before he came in sight of the sentinel pacing to and fro before the temporary barracks, in which Lieutenant Charles Marshall was at present indulging in dreams of glory and realities of fever and ague.

Perhaps Lieutenant Charles had had enough of it likewise; for his "What? who? Arden! where did you drop from?—oh, by George, now, if this isn't jolly!" when our hero was introduced, was extremely emphatic and hearty. He was miserably ill, thought himself dangerously so, and was very glad to get Herman's opinion to the contrary, as well as his attentions as nurse. In this capacity, Herman devoted himself to him for a fortnight, and so successfully, that at the end of that time he thought him well enough to discuss his resignation, and proposed it to him accordingly.

"Why," said the lieutenant, putting his hand to his pulse, "you don't think I'm going to relapse, do you?"

"No, no. Let that alone, Charley. You'll only

put it out of order, like a watch, by fingering it. But, 'excuse my preaching a bit,' as I heard a Methodist minister say, in the steamboat which brought me down the river; we are all of us going before long to relapse into second childhood or death."

"Well, what then? One is more in the way of second childhood out of the army than in it; and since death must come, let it only be the death of honor and fame, and find us doing our duty."

"'Let it only find us doing our duty;' yes," said Herman, rather sadly, "and come when it will. But one of the first of our duties, and the hardest, too, sometimes, is to find out what our duty is. Tell yourself, Charley,—I won't ask you to tell me,—how much honor and duty there is in selling one's sword to a low-principled Government, as you won't deny that ours is just now, for the sake of fifteen hundred dollars a year, of figuring now and then in a paragraph in a newspaper, which is what I suppose you mean by fame, and of being a favorite with a certain class of ladies wherever you go, on account of your blue coat. I did not mean to frighten you. I think you are recovering fast. But if you stay in the army here and now, you may certainly be shot after shooting, in obedience to such orders as you may any day receive, some honest settlers, who ask only to be let alone, and would rather not do you any harm, if they had their choice; and then, in the grand court-martial over the clouds, if your Captain asks you why you killed his servants, your fellow-soldiers in the church-militant, shall you dare to speak of this sort of honor and duty to him?"

"Why, Arden, this seems to me the most extraordinary way of looking at the subject. I see it so entirely on the other side, that,"——



“On the upper side?—or on the lower side? As we hope both of us, I suspect, to spend our eternity in heaven above rather than in hell beneath, it appears to me a wise plan to ascend in thought as often as we may to the footstool of the throne of God, and take thence our views of earth and earthly things, that they may look to us now in our mortal three-score and ten, as they will hereafter from our death-beds, and through the countless ages of our immortality.”

“Well, then; if you insist upon putting it on that ground, I don’t see how I am to know that the stranger I shoot in a crowd is a Christian.”

“How are you to know that he is not? A Mahometan, it is said, will not destroy a stray piece of paper without examination, because the name of Allah *may* be written on it. Would you like to shoot into a crowd where you knew that Christ *might* be? Did he not say, ‘Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me?’ ”

“But do you think that all his words are to be taken so literally?”

“No, not all; nor yet do I think that any of them are to be explained away so as practically to mean nothing, which is the more common error. I think that, whenever he spoke, he meant something. What do *you* suppose he meant when he said that?”

“Why,—I don’t know;—in the way of one’s duty,”——

“It is your duty, if you are bidden, to kill or crush these Free-State settlers, very much as it was the duty of Alva and his men to kill and crush the Netherlanders, of Judge Jeffreys to butcher his countrymen on the Bloody Assizes, or of the Roman soldiers to crucify our Saviour. Would you like, for the sake of

present glory and honor, to have your name stand before posterity beside theirs? Would you like to cast in your lot with theirs in the other world?"

"Why, of course not; but, as to the Saviour and those words of his, you must excuse my saying again, that I think you are very literal and very extravagant."

"Well, let it pass then for the present; and make up your mind at your leisure as to what he did mean."

"Joshua and David fought."

"But we must remember that they firmly and fully believed that God was on their side, and they on His. In the light which Christianity has thrown on the character of the Father, I find it difficult to assure myself that He ever takes a pleased part in the domestic brawls of His sons; but if He does,—He, the giver of free will,—I know and am sure that it is on the side of freedom, rather than of slavery."

"There again, now,—there again, you see, there is a very important difference between us in the very grounds we stand upon. I do not know that slavery is wrong. How do you?"

"Pooh, pooh, Charley! For shame, Boston boy! You must have been keeping bad company, and they have stolen your wits. How do you know that twice two is four? Is there any such anomaly or miscalculation in the creation, as that the Creator should send some human souls into the world with several hundred human bodies belonging to each, and some thousands of other human souls into the world with no bodies belonging to them at all? When one soul can wear a hundred bodies at a time, let it claim them as its own, and not till then. If you seriously want an argument, though, you shall have it. I do not think I exaggerate

when I assert that a very large majority of persons in civilized countries say that slavery is wrong. The minority, who say that it is right, are for the most part persons whose interests, real or fancied, bid them say it is right. Now, the presumption is very strong that a thing, which almost all uninterested persons denounce, and few except interested persons uphold, is an *offence* which deserves no *defence*. Then, to go back to Joshua and David, we must further remember that they were not Christians, and had not Christians to fight against. I think we may get a little side-light upon the Gospel doctrine of social duty from St. Paul's consternation at finding that some of his brethren were going to law against one another before the unbelievers. How little he probably dreamed that the name of 'fellow-Christian,' before unbelievers and believers, too, both nominal and real, would soon or ever get to be less a title to the good-will and good offices of one's sharers in it, than Odd-Fellow is now. 'Why do ye not rather take wrong?' he says. 'Why do ye not rather be defrauded?'

"Would you be a non-resistant, then?"

"I cannot say, yes. I will not say, no, until I have lived and thought longer, and sifted the matter through and through. Thus far I have gone, and no further as yet: The whole spirit of the Gospel, so far as I understand it, is the spirit of filial and brotherly love. Can a man, full of this spirit, kill his brother, his Father's son? Perhaps, yes; perhaps, no. But can he kill him for the sake of flattery, or pay, or promotion, or even to enrich any of his favorite brothers, (i. e., his countrymen or his party,) by the portion of that one? No; a thousand times, no! But may he not kill him because he sees him lifting his hand against his other

brothers, his mother, or his sisters, or their helpless little ones? Yes, perhaps, if there be no other way; but if he can find any other way, he will thank God, and take it."

"Ah, well. Now you are beginning to look at the other side of the question; and your own good sense and candor show you at once that there's a great deal in it. Any soldier, who deserves the name, is glad and proud when he sees the pretty girls smiling around him," said the lieutenant sentimentally, "to think how quickly his sword would leap out of the handsome scabbard, which they admire so much, to defend them. We think of that, I can assure you, on many a hard march."

"Marches to defend them against home-keeping Mexicans,—against squaws and papooses? Ah, Lieutenant, there's a good deal of romance, I fear,—no, call things by their true names,—a good deal of falsehood in our notions of war. If it were always or usually in defence of mothers, sisters, and wives, or even of our altars and hearths, I could find it in me to covet that sword of yours, and to wish, too, perhaps,—heaven forgive me!—that I might soon have a chance to draw it. But for one woman who is really protected by war, are not hundreds made orphans, and widows, and worse? Let us be frank with ourselves now, as our Judge will be with us hereafter. Thus much is to me as clear as daylight: defensive war only, if any war, is permitted to a Christian."

"Very well. Let it be granted; and see what comes of it. The soldier is the hand. The head is at Washington. The head opens its mouth, and says, 'War exists by the act of Mexico, or of Nicaragua, Kansas, or Cuba,' or, 'Our frontiers need protection against the Indians.' Don't you take? Shall the hand mutiny

against the head? The head says: 'The war is a defensive war. Carry it on.' It is the duty of the head to judge. It is my duty to obey."

"Excuse me. In my judgment, the head of Christian men is *overhead*. If you are a Christian man, you are under orders which take precedence of any from Washington."

"Would you have me mutiny whenever orders come which I don't approve?"

"Not at all. When orders come, too bad for you to obey, I would have you resign."

"Suppose the orders came at such a moment, that my resignation would leave my innocent troops at the mercy of an enemy. What should you say then?"

"Nothing, my poor dear fellow. Your situation would be cruel enough in itself. I should not have the heart to embitter it further by a single word of mine."

"Well, what should you think, then?—You are checkmated now, I believe."—

"Do you? My predominant idea would probably be, that if you had had any reason to foresee the possibility of a dilemma so horrible, compelling you to be accessory to the destruction of one of two innocent parties, it was utterly incomprehensible that you should have waited to be caught in it."

"But you tell me I may fight in defence of my country; and I tell you, that I am not the judge of the character of her wars. It is to be taken for granted that Congress knows what it is about."

"'Half the mistakes in life,' according to a most sensible maxim, 'arise from taking things for granted.' You are an educated man, an intelligent man, and, if you are also a conscientious man, you have certain



qualifications as a judge, of your own conduct at least, which it would be taking a good deal for granted to attribute to the common run of 'available candidates' turned into members of Congress."

"You are complimentary; and in return I can do no less than tell you, that I never in my life saw such an impracticable, theoretical, wrong-headed, good-hearted fellow. Ride your hobby as far as you can, in the name of absurdity; and let us see where it will throw you. You'll allow at least, I hope, that we must have armies in readiness to protect our native countries, in the present state of this naughty world?"

"I am not prepared to deny it."

"Hurra! *Hup,—hup!* We've kept step together at last, like good *plebes*, for one whole second. Now, if I and my fellow-warriors are all of us going to resign whenever we are, or fear we are perhaps going to be, ordered to do anything that isn't quite proper, what will become of all the armies?"

"What, indeed! Don't you think you shall, some of you, wait till next week? You won't quite all throw up your commissions to-night; shall you?"

"You think we ought, don't you?"

"I think *thou oughtest*; what will my opinion signify to anybody else? My business is with thee,—thine with thyself. Do you not remember what our Master said to St. Peter,—when, after receiving a command and having his destiny pointed out to him, he turned to look after his fellow-disciple, and asked, 'Lord, and what shall this man do?'—'What is that to thee? Follow thou me.' If we wait to do our own duty until we can decide what is, in every conceivable circumstance, the duty of everybody else, we are as reasonable, my patient, as we should be if we refused to do an

errand at the nearest town until we had drawn out the chart of the universe. A nephew of William Pitt, I have heard, resigned his commission in the British army, rather than serve against us in our Revolutionary war. Still England fought us, to her cost. An officer in our army,—so his own cousin told me,—left it when called upon to help the Georgians to the homes of the hospitable and friendly Cherokees. Still the Cherokees were driven out. Do you honestly think that, if you follow the example of those two gentlemen, there'll be any difficulty in refilling your place at once? Until a great revolution,—a great regeneration, to use the clerical word,—has taken place in the moral sense of the world on the subject of war, the army will not be dismembered by Christianity, nor will there be by any means much difficulty in finding officers and soldiers enough to march out readily for aggressive warfare. When that great regeneration has taken place, it will pervade the community and cabinet as much as the camp; and Christian officers and soldiers will never more be ordered out for aggressive warfare; no great change for the worse, surely; and every man, who has done anything, in cabinet, camp, or community, towards bringing it about, will have struck a noble blow in the good fight for the establishment of Christ's kingdom on earth. We, nominal Christians, are as heathen still in council and camp as Homer's heroes. A corrupt knot of office-holders want an unjust war for their own interest. There is an outcry against it, at first, among good Christians at home. Good Christians in the army sigh over it; because their true hearts tell them that it is unnatural work for them to despoil and destroy their brothers; but, because their sophistical heads assure them that it is their duty, they march off and do it,

notwithstanding, as obediently as if they were bad Christians or good Pagans. In compliance with the wishes of their fellow-Christians at Washington, or London, or Paris, or Vienna, they take,—we won't say steal,—the required number of towns from their fellow-Christians over the border, and kill,—we won't say murder,—the necessary number of their fellow-Christians, the owners, for defending them as it is *their* duty to do. (What is the fountain-head of duty to all Christians, but the will of Christ? Can Christ give conflicting orders to his servants? Can he smile to see them kill one another?—he, who is 'with them alway, even unto the end of the world?' If their faith had eyes strong enough to see him stand by and look on, could they slay on?) However, their notable victories over their brothers abroad soon reconcile their brothers at home to the war. It becomes popular. The office-holders gain their objects; and the success of their expedient is noted as a good hint for future use. The army are said to have covered themselves with glory. Is that, their glory so-called, the reward of loyal soldiers, deserters, or fratricides? Is it their King's cause, or that of the arch-Rebel, in which they have fought? Is it Christ's crown, or one of Satan's weaving, which sits upon the baptismal spot on their foreheads? If our fellow-Christians are not our brothers, as St. Paul calls them, in some strong and binding sense, it is as false as Satan in us to call them so, over our Bibles, or at church, or anywhere else. If they are our brothers, it is as cruel as Cain in us to kill them, for any grudge against them of our own or another's. What shall we say, then, of sacrificing our Master in the person of his followers for self-interest? Is not that a little too much like Judas?"

"Pshaw, Arden, pshaw! You talk like a woman. You've nursed me like one, too, though; so I'll forgive you."

"Like what sort of a woman, Marshall?—a good, or a bad?—If the former, I have a good right to be listened to, when I speak to a question of right and wrong. Like what woman?"

"Like a very good and dear, but a very trying one to me sometimes, I must say;" answered Marshall, rising and walking up and down the room. "I dare say she sent you here to look after me. God bless you both! You came when you were a good deal wanted. She's a dear, tender, affectionate soul, and always means well and kindly by me, I believe; but I suffer not the woman to teach nor to usurp dominion over the man; do you?"

"To teach?" Yes, if she is modest and quiet about it; as St. Paul's own friend, Priscilla, seems to have been suffered. 'To usurp dominion?' No. I suffer no usurpation anywhere, that it lies with me to forbid. It seldom works well for either party concerned in it. If a woman,—or a child even,—pointed out to me a wrong that I was doing, or a duty left undone, I should consider her words a message from God to me, perhaps in answer to my prayers for guidance,—an answer that I must take or go without any,—and her a messenger, provided she spoke in a proper spirit."

"My mother is extravagant the moment she gets beyond her province,—extravagant to a degree! I should not say so to anybody else, you know; but to you I may, because you know how much good sound sense and feeling she has in matters she does understand. What do you think she said to me the very

night before I left home to come here?—That she would rather I should be killed by, than kill, any of these haranguing Yankee *clod-hoppers*! And she a widow, and I her only son, and the tears streaming down her poor old face at the time at such a rate that I couldn't bear to see it! What do you think of that yourself?"

"There spoke the Christian Spartan,—the Spartan matron, for she preferred your honor to your life,—the Christian, for she preferred your loyalty to Christ to either! She would rather have your body spotted with your own blood, (though I believe it would kill her, Charley; for I must tell you that her anxiety about you is preying upon her constitution seriously,) than your soul with the blood of your neighbour. The one stain would last a little longer than the other. She is less near-sighted than most people, and can see beyond the grave; that is all."

"Well, one of you is as bad as the other. But after all, Arden, there's more than one flaw in your reasoning, that I should have picked before, if I could have got a chance. Religion has nothing to do with these worldly matters, as I have often told her."

"What has it to do with us, then, while we are in the world?"

"You know as well as I. It teaches us that we must pray,"——

"One way, and live another?"——

"And read our Bibles,"——

"And not obey them?"

"Our Bibles say, 'Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's,'——

"'And unto God the things that are God's'; but nowhere, Render yourself unto Cæsar, if I recollect right.



Our master is Christ. He bids us, upon our allegiance, do good and no wrong to our neighbour. If we think we can, while in his service, enter into some more lucrative or honored service besides, we may do so unblamed; but we do so at our peril, for, the moment the second service conflicts with the first, we must abandon the second or be traitors. 'Loyalty first, lucre afterwards. Merit first, applause afterwards. Christ first, Cæsar afterwards.' You understand, I trust, all this time, that I am not maintaining that Christianity calls upon us for an armed resistance to unrighteousness. For a passive resistance, it does call upon us continually. If there is a genuine hero on earth, in my judgment it is an independent man, who, when driven to the wall by some unholy custom or law, breaks it by his action, and mends it by his suffering. He is a Daniel in the palace of Nebuchadnezzar. He serves God peaceably, in spite of the king, and takes the consequences. Unflinchingly he goes into the lions' den, and brings out of it liberty of conscience henceforward, not merely for himself, but for his more timid brethren. The doctrine of individual responsibility and allegiance to God, is the very corner-stone of religion. As long as allegiance and responsibility to man are allowed to take its place, it will be difficult to find anything too bad for good men to do. Christianity is the leaven which creeps through the meal, not all at once, but particle by particle, until the whole is leavened. Its work upon society, under God, must be done, if at all, like that of its Founder, by individual action and individual suffering. It is scarcely possible for any individual in the midst of a fallen race to stand upright towards God, without doing something by the very act to raise those above him, and taking some

weight off those below him. We are all of us, by our own low standard of loyalty, helping to keep each other down."

"These fine-spun considerations may be all very well for ministers, martyrs, and professed followers of Christ; but flaw the second is, that you continually talk of my loyalty and allegiance to him, when I have never promised him any, and never will, till I am prepared, consistently, honorably, and in all respects, to fulfil my engagements, whatever they may bind me to. I am not a member of the church, my dear Arden. Did you think that I was?"

"In a certain way. I supposed that you had been baptized into it."

"Of course, when I was a baby; but that was no affair of mine."

"You were entered in the church, then, before you entered the army. So far, the church would seem to have the prior claim to you, not to speak of your being God's by creation. I will say nothing of your being Christ's by redemption; because I do not know whether you will or will not choose to accept the terms on which that is offered you. But if the claims of the church and those of the army upon you conflict, which do you mean to abide by? As you say, I don't think your being baptized, by the will of others, binds you in honor, though it may somewhat in gratitude."

"There's no use in talking. I cannot, at present, give up my profession."

"If you are not ready at any moment, at any cost, to give up anything in order to follow Christ, go into the church, Marshall, to whose altar your mother carried you in her arms. Go when its members are all assembled to welcome some other child into its fold.

Go not in bravado, but in sober sadness. Dip your hand into the font before them all, and say, With this hand I wash from my brow that sign which you laid upon it, but which it has proved unworthy to wear. A follower of Christ I cannot be. My sandals are not stout enough to follow his bare and bleeding feet through low and thorny ways ; and he who is not with him is against him. A hypocrite I will not be. If I range myself on Satan's side, at least it shall be under no false colors.—You could not do it, Marshall. An unchristian man you think you can make up your mind to be ; but an unchristened one you would not. Yet Christ said not, He who merely does not deny me before men, ‘I will confess before my Father Who is in heaven ;’ but ‘he who confesses me before men.’ We dispute Christ's claims upon us ; we would not consent to cast from us a tithe of our claims upon him ; yet what is baptism but an empty form,—a desecrated form,—if the spirit be not washed, but only the body ? It is so with us almost all. We cling to the Christ with one hand ; and we push away the Cross with the other. We would have his wages,—not his work. We take our stand on this world with both feet, and lay hold on the threshold of heaven's gate with just so many unwilling fingers only, as we think may enable us to vault in, when we feel that at last the slippery earth is rolling from underneath us, and that we must go *somewhere* else,—a desperate and disgraceful game to play ! You cannot make up your mind to be altogether Satan's. Be altogether God's, then, for integrity's, and loyalty's, and honor's sake ! St. Paul bids us, ‘Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds ;’—a task hard enough for most of us to achieve in the time given us to do it in,

yet not, it would seem, hard enough to satisfy our ambition; for we most of us choose a harder, saying to ourselves, '*Be conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds*'; and in the self-contradictory endeavour to accomplish this, we spend our strength and life in vain, succeeding only in the first half of it. No; this world is not yet conformed to Christianity, nor can we yet be transformed by Christianity, while conforming ourselves to the world. It is a less unchristian world than it was, thanks to the saints of eighteen centuries, who have lived and died to make it so; but its every unwilling step towards righteousness has been planted on the heart of some faithful servant of Christ, whom it trampled under its feet for dragging it forward, but who, if he died himself, left his impetus alive in it. It will not be a Christian world, nor a world in which one can be a Christian, yet conformed to it, until it has been dragged on and up for centuries again by men animated with the spirit of the apostolic age. Thanks to the faithful men of that age, it has lowered its tone a little since their day; but everywhere,—in every path in life, in the camp, the courts, the church, the shop, the hall of legislature,—it meets us, still the same perverse old world that tried to face them down, but tried in vain, thanks to their faith that we have not, and their manhood that we have not, and their Master that we have, and deny, through our thoughtlessness and cowardice and paltriness, at every turn. Afraid or ashamed any longer to say to us, '*Be conformed to me on pain of the nails, the lions, the rack, or the stake,*' it still says, '*Be conformed to me on pain of loss, discredit, insult, plainer clothes, a smaller house, or harder fare;*' while still, as in those old days in Judea, the

voice of the Saviour answers low and solemnly, 'What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?' Whose voice of the two we are following, Marshall, you and I, we must judge for ourselves, until Christ judges for us; but the soldier, who puts up his sword into the sheath in obedience to orders brought him by the telegraph of conscience from his Commander-in-chief at the right hand of God, rather than carry out the bloody designs of some mutinous Satan-serving human subaltern,—the judge who, in submission to the decrees of the Judge of the Supreme Court, puts his ermine off rather than dabble it in the gory mud, following a lackey at the heels of Tyranny,—the young preacher who comes down from the pulpit where he hoped to wear his hoary hairs one day, rather than keep back God's truth, or utter a lie therein,—the merchant, who lets his profits go, that he may hold fast his principles,—the statesman, who sits down in patient obscurity, rather than serve a faction against God and his country,—nay, even the poor underling, who, with a needy family, refuses, in the name of Christ, to help serve a false warrant, and takes the consequences with him, instead of food and clothing, to his home,—all these, glory be to them! They are doing what it is their duty to do, though no more. It may not be much,—not much compared with the doings and sufferings of the first martyrs and confessors;—but it will be something to keep them from hanging their heads in utter shame, when the glorious company of those first martyrs shall open its shining ranks to receive them to its bosom."

"How *could* the affairs of the world ever be carried on, if your principles prevailed?"

"As we pray every day that they may be car-



ried on, Thy will, oh God, being done, on earth as it is in heaven!"

"But what a condition a man would be in, if his religion was liable any day to drag him away from his business!"

"In no worse a condition than those first Christians, who were liable any day, for the sake of their religion, to be dragged from their business to torture and death. Christ said, 'If any man hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.'"

"That was in the first age of the church."

"He said it in some sense, I think, for all time. The world's exactions have been a little lessened since. That was God's demand, like Himself, unchangeable. There was no partiality there. The outward condition of later Christians has been softened, as I said, through the hardships conquered by those earlier ones; but there are still strongholds of evil to be brought down, still martyrdoms to be suffered, and still palms unwon. Heaven and heavenly glory are still offered to us on the same inward conditions that they were to them,—no easier, no harder."

"Can you fulfil those conditions, as you understand them, yourself, Arden?"

"I have been trying for three or four years past to train myself to fulfil them," answered Herman, simply; "but I have been surprised to find what *up-hill* work it is. If I can say forty or fifty years hence, on my death-bed, that I have succeeded at last, I shall think that I have done a pretty good life's work."

"Do you mean, then, to denounce, and expect me to denounce, all professional soldiers, who merely obey orders through thick and thin, as no Christians?"

"By no means. To their own master let them stand or fall. The Gospel has always appeared to me a code of laws marvellously adapted for a man's using in his judgments of himself,—marvellously adapted for his not using to pass judgment upon his neighbours."

"Then, Arden, why do you,—why will you,—use it to pass judgment upon me?"

"Have I been arrogant?" said Herman, stopping short, and putting the question to himself as much as to his friend.

"Not you. No, no. Forgive me."

"It is a bad tone, that one gets insensibly in political wrangling; but, indeed, I did not mean to use it towards you. I fancied myself all this time not your judge, but your advocate, pleading your cause against the adversary of all souls. If I was bitter, it was against him, not you, my dear old fellow."

"There is no bitterness, I believe, Arden, that your look and voice could not sweeten, to any one who in my circumstances, sick, and alone, and forlorn, had learned to——Pshaw! pshaw! I'm too well now to have an excuse for sentimentalizing, or for being peevish, either. Go on. But suppose I can't understand what the Gospel requires of me?"

"Can't you? or won't you?—*Shall* I go on?—In either case, you will not be a very valuable servant, and must not expect high wages. No; I will not put it on so low grounds;—you will hear no word, 'Well done!' Did not you hear what your Georgian major, —what's his name? Anathema?"—

"No, Annameth,"—

"Oh, yes,—said to his black, Pete, the other morning, when he'd done something more ingeniously blundering than usual, and made some such excuse for it? With

more oaths than I shall repeat, (partly because they were more than I can remember, and partly because I won't teach my tongue the trick of them,) he inquired, patly enough, as I thought, 'You — — — — scoundrel, you, why the — — didn't you understand?' "

"He does swear, doesn't he?"

"Yes; I should think he would want to, sometimes. Slaveholding is certainly one of those sins, which bring their own punishment with them.—Your mental understanding is good enough. The defect, if there is any, must be in your *morale*. The great Physician had healing for the blind, but not for those who wilfully shut their eyes. If you can see, but will not, you must set your highest hopes on being suffered in heaven as a penitent sinner, not welcomed as a victorious saint. The triumph of the saints who follow you will be, not the having completed, but having undone, the work you did on earth. Where will be your point of sympathy with them, or theirs with you, or yours with Christ?"

"Arden, I should not have been petulant; but the fact is, that you give me more pain than you think. I am not altogether so thoughtless and heartless a fellow as you may consider me. In sickness and solitude, a man often gets morbid; and you bring up, only a great deal more vividly, ideas that haunted and tormented me miserably in the first of my illness, before you came to cheer me up and set me on my legs again."

"Perhaps, too, you think that I owe you an apology, my dear Marshall, as a citizen, for undertaking to express an opinion upon your position in the army here; and so, perhaps, I do, if I have not taken my opinion from you; but I thought that I had, from

things you have been letting fall incidentally ever since I came. If you heartily believe upon good grounds, that you are likely to be called on here only to protect good citizens, not to persecute them, my strictures upon *offensive* warriors don't apply to you. Christianity has to do with general principles; individual Christians, with the particular application of them, I admit. Judge of your own duty, then, on your own responsibility; but judge impartially, for the sake of your mother and your old friend, for your responsibility is an awful one;—and you *do* still think it wrong for you, in these circumstances, to remain in the army. I knew you formerly, and know you now, well enough to be sure that I am not mistaken. Am I?"

"Well, it's pretty hard for me to get out of it."

"Pretty inconvenient to do what one thinks right, pretty often. Yes, I know that very well."

"I tell you, Arden, you don't consider! You don't seem in the least to see how it is. I should say you hadn't the least feeling for me, if I could say it, looking back over the last two weeks, without being a more ungrateful and paltry fellow even than you think me. It isn't with me as it is with you. You're rich enough to afford to 'keep a conscience,' and yet live as you please. You were born a gentleman; and I'm only one by virtue of my commission. All the prospects in life of my family depend on my working my way up in the army. If I leave it, I must go down to drudge at a clerk's desk, and set my poor little sisters to wear themselves out in keeping school; if I stay in the army, I can, with economy, dress them well, introduce them well, and marry them well. My first duty is to them and my mother. I'm a faithful son to her, if I do serve her against her will. Don't you think

yourself, that our circumstances point out to us our duties in life?"

"No doubt, to a certain extent; but some of them bid us to be led by them, and some to struggle, that by wrestling we may wring from them the blessing which they were sent to bestow upon us. As to position in fashionable society, Marshall, I can't help you much; for, with all the gentility which you give me credit for, I'm in Coventry at present myself"—

"You, Arden!"

"I, Marshall,—though on no account which need make me blush for myself, or my friends for me;—but my sister is not; and I can answer for her, that she'll be very happy to make the acquaintance of yours, and introduce them. I am in circumstances,—thank heaven!—to help a friend to keep a conscience, if a pretty well-filled purse can do it; and you must share mine with your old school-fellow, if only to prove to him that he has not lost your friendship by his pertinacious harangues. With your abilities and education, you'll soon make your way as a civil engineer; and then your mother will no longer sigh over your remittances as I have heard her lately, regarding them as the price of blood, yours or your countrymen's."

"God bless you! With all your cranks, you're the best-hearted fellow that ever lived; but there's tattoo! It's time for me to turn in. We'll talk about this, perhaps, some other time."

They had little more time for talking, for several days; as the young officer was now well enough to resume his duty, and took an extra share of it, on the plea that he must repay his comrades for their extra trouble during his illness. Perhaps he was not very sorry; for though Herman, in the foregoing conversa-



tion, had softened his "*fortiter in re*" with a "*suaviter in modo*"—an expression in tone and manner of cordial interest in his friend, and pain in giving pain, which is quite lost in my report of his words—they had struck home more than once. Marshall was kind-hearted, affectionate, and intelligent; but he was one of that more numerous than enviable class of men, who have just conscience enough to keep them wavering in the wrong,—too little to keep them unwavering in the right.

A few days after, after an absence of a few hours, he returned to his room, where he had left Herman to "keep house for" him. He bade him good afternoon, with an elaborate imitation of his usual manner, came up to the table at which Herman was reading, brought down his fist upon it with all his force, swore, dashed himself into a chair beside it, leaned his arms and face upon it, and burst into tears.

"My dear Marshall," cried Herman, "my dearest fellow! What's the matter? What has happened to you?"

"The matter is," said Marshall, bringing it out as fast as he could between oaths, and sobs, and curses, "that, as the devil would have it, I've killed little Sophy's husband,—little Sophy, Arden,—my own little cousin,—the best little thing that ever was! She married a school-master, and came out here. So delighted she was, too, when she found I was stationed here, to think, as she said, he would have a friend in the army, if worse came to worst. All through my sickness, she was making little nice things for me, and making him bring 'em."

"Well, but, Marshall, how did this happen?"

"A'n't I telling you as fast as I can? They sent me,—

d— 'em, too late to do any good!—down to Alganock Precinct, to see to the voting. The Border Ruffians came, of course; and, before I could get there, they and some of the Free-State men had got into a row. They wouldn't disperse; so I had to charge into 'em; and when they did scatter, there was his tallow face looking up at me out of the dust, under my horse's hoofs! I backed off of him, and picked him up, coughing blood, and groaning blood, and breathing blood,—he couldn't speak. A pretty sight for her to see brought home!—and she going to be confined, nobody knows how soon!”

“How came he there?”

“Don't I tell you? He was one of the judges; and when the other two caved in, and he saw that all the Ruffians would be let vote, he took the ballot-box and ran,—the only thing he could do to put a stop to it. They ran after, the Ruffians and Pro-Slaverys, and tried to get the box. He stood to it like a pluckier fellow than I thought him,—he always seemed one of your peaceable, scrupulous slow coaches;—and some of the other Free-States came to help him; and 'twas a free fight all round. Oh, d—it! What's the use in talking? Such things must happen, if the Abolitionists will kick up a row. 'Twas no fault of mine.”

“Indeed, I hardly see that it was. It was a horrible accident; and you must feel it terribly; but you were interfering to prevent mischief, not to make it. Thank God for that, Marshall! Thank God for that!”

“Thank the devil! I don't thank God, and I won't, for anything about it! Can't you wait to hear the whole story before you begin with your congratu-

lations, if I've got to tell it all out, word for word, before you can see through it?"

"I thought you had finished. Let me hear."

"The first fight was before I came up. The Ruffians on the ground, then, were two or three to the Free-States one. They knocked Robbins down, wrenched the ballot-box out of his hand, got back to the polls, crowded them, chose judges of their own, and voted as fast as they could. He, thinking himself responsible for the integrity of the vote, rallied his party in considerable force, and besieged the polls. He was foremost, nearest the house. I didn't see him. The Free-State men wouldn't give in, unless I'd promise 'em that nobody should vote, who wasn't according to their notions qualified. I couldn't. I had no authority. My orders were only to see that the election went on peaceably,—not to say who should vote, and who shouldn't. I couldn't go beyond my orders, could I?"

"I think not. Go on."

"I'm going on as fast as I can. So the Free-States laid on to the Ruffians; and we laid on to the Free-States; and that's all. It's the fortune of war. I only did my duty. He did his. There's nobody to blame. —Poor little Sophy! I wonder if he's dead yet. I wonder if she knows."—

"What! Did he *not* die?"

"How should I know? They carried him all wriggling into a shed. I couldn't stay to look on, of course, with them all glowering round at me, and taunting me, too."

"Had they a surgeon?"

"No; I galloped as fast as I could to Bayou's quarters, and begged him to go as I never begged a brother

officer to do me a favor before. He wouldn't budge an inch. He said he knew, by what I told him, 'twas no use."

"Where is the man?" cried Herman, starting up.

"What! are you going? God in heaven bless you! I never thought of you. Do you think you could save him? Here, put on my uniform great-coat for a passport. The country is swarming still with those bandits.

"I cannot; it is stained."

"No, it isn't. Where?"

"No matter. Lend me your pistols."

"There. Why won't you take the coat?"

"Thank you. I like mine better just now.—I'm going among Free-State men, remember."

"Bless you! They wouldn't lay a finger on it. Don't you know, they're very careful how they meddle with lawful authorities?"

"If so, a good reason," thought Herman, "why lawful authorities should be very careful how they meddle with them." He hastily received Marshall's hurried directions, and set off, promising to bring or send him good news, if he could, as soon as he could.

There was no more good news to be brought or sent from poor Robbins in this world, except that his sufferings were over. He lay on some straw in the shed into which he had been carried. His friends, having taken off their coats to cover him, in a vain effort to keep out the chill of death, stood in their shirt-sleeves around him, looking helplessly and hopelessly on. At his feet, and staring immovably with her bright, glassy eyes, as if fascinated, at the grisly contortions of limb and feature which he could not suppress, crouched a little black-haired, white-skinned creature, in whom

Herman had no difficulty in recognising "Sophy." As tearless as unsmiling, she, like a medical student in a hospital, gravely, composedly, intently, observed and studied the agonies of her husband, seeming not to let a motion nor a look escape her, but catching each one with a curious kind of greediness. She did not stir, except now and then slightly, with a sort of unconscious mimicry, to copy some writhing or grimace of his. He gazed at her with much more apparent terror than she, at him.

"My God!" groaned he, in a deep, dull voice, like a dead man speaking out of a tomb, "Poor Sophy!—how she looks!—take her away." The blood frothed at his lips as he spoke. She blew bubbles from hers like a baby, put her fingers to them, looked at her fingers, seemed surprised that they were not red, and looked back at him.

"Come, Miss Robbins," said an elderly man, soothingly, "You come home along o' me. Marthy and Huldý have got something mighty pretty to show ye,—some little baby-socks, red and yeller, they've been a knittin.—Come, your husband don't like to see you here, all among the men-folks. We'll take the best o' care of him; an I guess he'll feel some better by and by.—Come, and we'll go down to your place, and get a bed in the team, and come back and fetch him."

She did not stir, nor seem to hear, but kept watch, still with the same passionless intensity, while Herman busied himself with her husband. "I am a physician," said he, stepping within the ring; "let me see if I cannot do something to relieve you."

The man looked up wistfully and gratefully into his face; but "no use," he said; and it was of no use. His



spine and ribs were so injured, that examination could be only added torment; and the last cold drops were already on his brow. "Only take care of her,"—gasped he, "it's enough to kill her.—Take her away,—for pity's sake!—Oh!—kiss me, Sophy, and go." She rose, sank again, crawled to him on her hands and knees, put her lips towards his, and then, stopped midway, as it seemed, by his deathly look, and forgetting the kiss, resumed her trance-like watch. Herman took her hand, and spoke to her; but when he would have led her away, she resisted him with all her passive strength, though without a word, or turning her eyes for an instant from her husband.

"Here, Atkins," said the man who had first addressed her, beckoning to another, like him somewhat advanced in life, but hale, hearty, and respectable-looking, "she don't know what she's about. This is awful for him, and enough to craze her for life. I'll git behind her, an take her easy by the shoulders; and you lift her feet; and we'll see if we can't git her off quietly, and down to my house. We'll git the girls to put her to bed; and may-be she'll sleep it off. We're such old friends, I guess she won't mind us."

They tried it, and tried it in the most compassionate and considerate way; but, as soon as the little fragile creature understood what was intended, her apathy gave place to the most frenzied rage. She flew at their faces with her nails, and scratched and bit like a wild cat at bay.

"Hold on!" moaned the groaning voice through her screams.—"Don't vex her.—There, there, Sophy.—You shall stay."

They set her down. She threw herself upon him, and clasped her arms so tightly round his mangled

form, that he cried out in his turn. She loosed her hold, and raised her head to look at him once more. She saw a corpse, and with another wild cry fell into strong convulsions.

“So, most miserable wife of a most miserable husband,” thought Herman, “I would rather be even in your place than Marshall’s! What shall I say to him? It would be happier,—ten thousand times happier,—I suppose, for you to die; but for his sake, pray God I may save you!”

He could not save her; nor could the best physician of the neighbouring towns, who was brought in, in the course of the evening, by one of her husband’s friends, after they had got her home in an ox-cart. With Herman, he did what could be done for her through the night. In the morning, all hope was gone; and he was obliged to go to his other patients, and leave her to Herman. He stayed by her till noon, when he gave her up to the undertaker. He wandered through her little cabin. Rude as it was without, it looked neat and tasteful within, and cheerful, all excepting the chamber where the two young corpses lay, side by side. Between them on their bed lay another, looking like a stranger to the day-light, the little waxen baby, that was never to see the light of the sun,—that neither of its parents had ever seen,—dressed in a tiny white robe, which the women had found beside its mother’s work-basket, with the needle still sticking in the last stitch, where she had probably left it, as she started up to hear of the father’s murder. The flowers, fresh still, which she had gathered the day before, were taken by the sobbing girls from the vase in which she had put them, in her simple parlour, to strew her shroud.

“Better so,” said Herman, as, these arrangements

completed, he came back, and stood leaning against the door-post to take his parting look; "poor harmless people! Since man must needs have the life of one of you, I see the mercy of God in this, that He took you all together!"

It was already near sunset, when he set out on his return to the barracks. He walked slowly; for he dreaded his meeting with Marshall, and wished, by diverting his thoughts for a time from the tidings which he had to bring, to overcome or at least lessen his own sense of their horrors, that he might the more gently impart them to his friend. He passed by the place where the skirmish had been. The trampled grass and flowers were beginning to lift up their heads again. The clear waters of the creek that ran by, were swelling up into, and washing away, the hoof-prints in the banks of the ford. The birds perched and sang, where the men must have struggled and shouted curses only yesterday. The earth had sucked in the few, small, dark pools of blood; and the sinking sun shone still upon the spots, as if to dry them out of sight. If they cried out of the ground to God, God only heard. All was peaceful and still. Nature seemed striving forgivingly to heal and efface all the prints and scars which Man's outrages had left upon her fair countenance, that they might bear no witness against him to her Maker. Herman leaned against the trunk of a tall hickory, and stood endeavouring to breathe her patient calmness in.

"Ah," said he to himself, "is Man forever to be the one blemish on the face of this beautiful creation? Is humanity forever destined to make the single discord in the diapason of the universe? My countrymen, are we to gorge this fresh virgin continent with blood

and crime, as our fathers and brothers did and do the old? Is it not a strange and sad proof of the difference between Christendom and Christianity, that eighteen hundred years after the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews wrote, 'Let brotherly love continue,' it should be found necessary to proclaim among *soi-disans* civilized nations, Let brotherly love begin, and that the doctrine should be accounted new, fanatical, unpractical, and wild? What a different state of things the world would by this time have presented, if that pure love had continued from the first to spread over it, the spirit everywhere, in only that one respect, keeping pace with the name, of the Saviour! The strong, instead of trampling upon the weak, would be seen lifting them up; the lofty, heard saying to the lowly, 'Come up higher,' instead of, 'Crouch beneath my footstool;' the learned, instead of seeking to fix their increasing knowledge as a great gulf between themselves and their fellow-men, would be oftener eagerly employed in making, by means of it, smoother roads for the ignorant to ascend upon. The unlucky debtor, instead of running away or blowing his brains out, would go with confidence to his wealthiest neighbour, and find no difficulty in obtaining aid, beyond an honest unwillingness to seek it. As often as a charitable deed was done, the pleasure would have been on the doer's side; the pain, if there was any, on that of the asker. The person, who had saved the most men, would be held a greater hero than he who had killed the most. He would be considered the greatest statesman, who showed the most skill in harmonizing the interests of other countries with those of his own. The poor savage would be guarded, borne with, and taught, by his civilized neighbours, as kindly and patiently as an idiot by his generous, manly

brothers. The beauty, instead of estimating the power of her charms, like that of a piece of ordnance, by the amount of mischief they could do, would deal with the happiness of her young admirers as cautiously as she would have her beautiful—no longer rival,—friend deal with that of her favorite brother. The brilliant and accomplished gentleman, instead of amusing himself by playing off the follies and drawing out the weaknesses of the artless and inexperienced, would, by the dignified respect he paid them, teach them to respect and dignify themselves. The ship-owner would say to the homesick emigrant, Will you sail? as readily as the Jehu says to the well-dressed native American, 'Will you ride?' Theft and murder would of course be unknown; drunkenness, idleness, and poverty, scarcely less so. The offender would be eager to acknowledge and repair his misdeeds; the offended, to forgive and have them forgotten. Envy and jealousy would have died a natural death. The joy of one would be the joy of every one. The poorer would work for themselves, readily and thoughtfully provided with employment, if necessary, by others; the richer, for their neighbours. The master would loose the slave; the slave, cling to the master. We should all be every day as eager and happy to befriend each other as we now are when some great calamity,—a fire, shipwreck, or tornado,—wakes up the angelic instincts in us, which so soon grow torpid again in our heavy worldly air, and for an hour or a week changes earth-worms into men, and men into heroes. Wherever we went,—north, south, east, or west,—we should find at need, in every stranger whom we met, the Good Samaritan, walking in some new disguise.

“ ‘There were no need of arsenals or forts.’ ”



The strength of nations, no longer suicidally wasting itself in their mutual destruction, would be combined for gigantic labors in breaking in for the service of man every practicable portion of our globe, and in bringing to light all its attainable hidden resources, for the prosperity of each and all. A new bliss, above the bliss of Eden, would quicken and warm all hearts,—the joy not only of receiving, but of doing good. The custom of seeking the welfare of others might have become, through gratitude, social sympathy, and a sort of generous competition, as ardent a passion as that of seeking one's own is now. Our old bad fashion of treating one another, and our God, as foes, has been tried long enough, not on the whole to the satisfaction of anybody, except that of Satan, who set it. It was already old when the Gospel was new,—long-tried, and always found wanting;—yet we have stupidly persisted, one after another, generation after generation, in continuing to try it ever since. When will the new fashion come in? When shall we find all within and without us zealously following the example of Christ in brotherly and filial love?"

Ah, not yet, young dreamer, not just yet! One generation of young dreamers,—and actors, too,—like you, might do something towards bringing it about; but you have fallen, like your Lord and Master before you, upon a generation,—not of vipers, altogether, by any means, but—of men, only men,—men as they used to be, men as they are,—neither angels nor devils, but mongrels, crosses between the two,—not Christians yet, with some apparently rare exceptions, if to be Christian is to be Christ-like,—but only no longer Jews nor Pagans!

As Herman's meditations reached the point above

recorded, he became aware that they were insensibly forming themselves into a tune, the time of which was marked by a steady sound, steadily approaching,—“thump! rub-a-dub! thump! rub-a-dub!” It was the beat of a drum. It had not, he thought, the precision of the performance of the regimental drummer. He had seen no reason to think that the Free-State men were likely to be out. They had told him, that the Border Ruffians had probably recrossed the border the night before. What could this mean? There was certainly the scraping of a fiddle, too; and now a noise of coarse singing! He resumed his walk towards barracks. The music followed him; and, turning his head from time to time, he soon saw following the sound into sight, a grotesque irregular procession of dogs, horses, and two or three hay-carts, in the midst of a mob of red-shirted, butternut-colored-trowsered, beardy men. They whipped and kicked the horses, and came hooting and hurrying on, some riding, and some running and holding by the hay-carts. Over the foremost a deep crimson flag, with a white star in the centre, flapped and swung from the staff, which was lashed to the right-hand corner-post of the frame. Here was a troop of ruffians, most evidently,—of Border Ruffians, most probably! Herman could not get out of their way without running,—nor with it, perhaps. He jogged on accordingly in their way. Their drum appeared to be persevering in a march; their fiddle in a jig. They themselves were in the meantime vocally performing, in a tipsy chorus, a simultaneous variety of “negro melodies,” among which “Ole Dan Tucker” was for the time predominant.

“High!” yelled one of them, preluding his recitative with a faithful imitation of an Indian war-whoop. “Dog-goned if h’ar ain’t Dan now!—

“ ‘Git out de way, ole Dan Tucker!  
You’s too late to come to supper,” &c.—

“Durn yer, ’tain’t nuther!” responded one of his tuneful brethren. “Swow, if ’tain’t Yankee Doodle. Gorry! View my splendifferous breeches!” continued he, looking down from his height, as the cart in which he stood came along by Herman, and plucking sympathetically at his own nether garments, which happened to be of buckskin. “Reckon woollens was cheap whar you was raised, strannger.

“ ‘Oh, Yankee Doodle’s comed to town,  
All dressed in striped trouse’s!  
Says he, The city’s built so thick  
I cannot see no houses!’

CHORUS.—“ ‘I cannot see no houses.’

Hoooh! yah! he! ho! ha!”

“What was the price o’ wooden nutmegs when you left Bosting, Y. Doodle, Esk?”

“What’ll yer take for Bunker’s Hill Monument to make a dam for the Mizzoura? Give yer a almighty dollar,—fifty cents more’n it’s wuth, too,—come!”

“How’s yer pilgrim father?”

“Durn yer fool,” cried another, extracting the nose of a bottle from his mouth, and in the act, as it were, uncorking his voice, “he ain’t no Yankee! His cheeks is just like a tomattur’s.”

“Dog-goned if he ain’t! See his rig. Trig as a tailor.”

“You be dog-goned, then! He ain’t got no gab. What’ll yer bet?”

“Treat all around, fust store we come to.”

“Done! Blast yer, Ketchum! Runnin over the moon, be yer? Hold on thar!”

The foremost cart, which had already gone jolting

by, halted; and so did the rabble rout, by this time encompassing Herman before, behind, and on one side. On the other side of the cart-track there, ran the river. Herman still made his way on as well as he could through the crowd, entrenching himself in silence."

"Ho, mister!" cried one of the disputants, calling after him from his cart, pricking the wheel-horse with a bowie-knife to make it start forward, and then pulling it up on its haunches beside our hero, "what d'yer call the travelin milk-pump with four trotters underneath, two pokers in front, one handle hangin down behind for you to grab at when you wants to catch her, an a leather jacket on?"

"Why, I suppose," said Herman, facing about and, in spite of his impatience to be rid of them, bursting into a hearty laugh at this most un-Agassiz-like description, "you must mean a cow."

"Thar, he said 'caow'!" exclaimed one of the betters, triumphantly. "Auld, he treats! Auld, he treats!"

"Durn yer, I won't!" rejoined Auld. "He didn't commence to. He said 'cow' as neat as any on us."

"Cause him to repeat it over again," said an elderly man better dressed than the others, who appeared to be in authority.

Herman had pushed on a few paces. The humane feats of the charioteer were re-performed; and the war-chariot was again at his side, with what looked like the muzzle of a small brass field-piece showing itself furtively at the side, through the straw in the bottom.

"Let's h'ar yer say it again, mister."

"Certainly," said Herman, good-humoredly, "on condition that you'll let me hear you say something afterwards; and that is, Good evening. It is time we were all getting into night-quarters; and your horses\_

and so-forth there block up the road." He repeated in a loud tone, so that all could hear him, the word "cow," and marched on as before.

"Vote by show of hands, gentlemen," said a voice behind him, which he took to be that of the elderly man who had previously interposed; "Does Auld treat, or Harrass? Those who deem the stranger to have said '*caow*' will evidence the same by holding up their right hands in token of assent. Harrass treats. It is a vote."

"Durn it all!" expostulated Mr. Harrass, doggedly, "I don't car' a dog-goned durn for that. He's larned ter say it since he come h'ar. You git him to hooray for Buck an Breck, an I'll give in."

"Ho, mister! let's h'ar yer hooray for Buck an Breck!"

The road here turned aside from the river into the prairies, and Herman determined to make his escape.

"There's a good old saying," he replied, "that 'one must not hurra till after election.' This is my way. Good night."

He turned aside over the grass, which, though breast-high along the creek, was not more than ankle-deep on the rising ground opposite. No effort was made to stop him; though he thought he distinguished stage-whispers and muttering asides of "He *is* a Yankee!" "a Abolitionist!" "Free-State spy!" But, as he reached the top of a line of sunset-gilded knolls, which in another minute would have hidden his form from the beholders, he heard a sharp crack and whistle, and felt a hard blow on his back, and warm gush over his hip. Before he had time to think what it could mean, he also felt the world roll over with him into the night, and ceased to think at all.\*

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\* See Note A. at the end of the volume.



## CHAPTER XIII.

## THE SISTERS OF CHARITY.

"Young women pretty and incapable; old women listless and useless; and both young and old, if women of sense, perishing of *ennui*, and longing for some kind of a career."

THE POTIPHAR PAPERS.

WHEN Herman came to himself, it was still very dark; and through the darkness he felt that he was carried along steadily without any effort of his own. His first vague idea was, that he was in the other world, and that the unseen ministers of eternal justice were bearing him on to receive his final doom. This notion was speedily put to flight, as his senses returned to their duty, by the sound of the footsteps of his bearers, and their quick, hard breathing. A sensation of sickness and pain from their motion presently added its testimony, feelingly to persuade him that he was still in the body. But was he in the hands of friends or foes?—a not uninteresting question for a man, who, within no very long time probably, had become weaker than a child.—He fixed his swimming eyes, as well as he could, on the darkness before him, and made out, as well as he could, the darker outline of a figure in it; and then his faintness returned, and he could only shut them again, and lose all other care in the one longing to have his possessors, whoever they were, only lay him down, anywhere, and let him alone.

In a few minutes more, lifting his heavy eyelids a second time, he saw himself going feet foremost into a

lighted place, which looked like the kitchen of a farmhouse. His bearers laid him down wearily on an old-fashioned wooden settle. As they stepped back from him, and raised their heads, the flickering fire-light showed them to be women, tall, and dressed in coarse black gowns, with huge white cape-bonnets, and black rosaries and crosses hanging at their waists. The first one was elderly, pale, and wrinkled, but had a quick eye, and a cheerful, though firm-set mouth. The other was—CONSTANCE ASPENWALL!—It was! It was!—She did not recognize him, for his face lay in shadow; but he saw her. She was turning away, but one glimpse was enough. As the other Sister of Charity began to feel his pulse, and say, “Ah! he’s coming to! Don’t be alarmed, sir, you’re among friends,” he could hear, through the open door, *her* own voice, so clear and liquid still, but so subdued, saying earnestly, in the next room, “Have you any hartshorn, madam?—brandy?—spirit of any kind?—Rum?—Oh yes, that will do, thank you!—And is there any surgeon you could send for? We have brought a poor man here, whom we found lying insensible down by Ash Creek, where they were fighting yesterday.”

The good woman of the house was heard hurrying and ruminating about in the next apartment for an instant, in an outburst of interjections of horror and hospitality, tongue, foot, and hand, apparently keeping time.

The old Sister stooped to dip a mug-full of water for Herman, out of a pail, which stood on the hearth.

Constance recrossed the threshold; and the pale and gory ghost of her lost love rose from his rude couch, and staggered before her. She tossed her arms wildly above her head, with all the shriek she did not utter

frozen in her face. He would have fallen at her feet in the track which his freshly-flowing blood had made, had not Sister Mary Peter, with the quick instinct of her profession, whirled round like a windmill, caught him, and replaced him on the settle. Constance followed mechanically; and through the sickness and faintness which returned upon him, he could hear her mutter, as if beside herself, "Oh, my God! I have killed him, and his wounds bleed afresh at the presence of his murderess!"

He struggled to rise again; but Sister Mary forbade it, with both word and deed. "Constance!" "Oh, Herman!" She came before him, and took his drooping hand. He put hers to his lips.

Sister Mary guessed something, sympathized, and covered the little scene from her hostess (whose attention was luckily divided for the moment by the operation of scraping with a knife, from her hands, the dough which covered them,) by the dexterous interposition of her person; but she could not possibly let this sort of proceeding go on. It was quite contrary to rule. "Go out, and see whether the boy has gone for the doctor, Sister Agnes Alexis," said she authoritatively, taking Constance by the arm; "and don't come back here till you're quite composed. The patient must be kept perfectly quiet. I'm going to undress him;" and she put Constance out. "It takes these young things some time to get used to the sight of blood; and he was a pretty heavy weight for her to carry. Mrs. Dobbs, if you had a chamber where we could put him to bed before the doctor comes,"—

"Certingly, Miss Peter, certingly. Right this way, ma'am. The best bed's all ready prepared. I'll git you my ironing-sheet to lift him on; an I guess I'd

better help you a spell, ef Miss Alexis is flustered.-- 'Twas something of a heft for you to fetch so fur. Pootty young man, ain't he? Hope he'll git over it; but he does look dreadful bad, don't he? I never! his eyes is open now. Hope he didn't hear what I said! La! he'll git over it fast enough, I'll bet."

Sister Mary locked the door, pocketed the key, and, aided and abetted by her chattering hostess, very gently and quickly exchanged Herman's clothes, moistened and stiffened with dew and blood, for a coarse, but clean, home-spun shirt. She then, no other surgeon being forthcoming, examined his wound, stanchd it, and bound it up as well as she could, which was not very badly; for she had formerly been employed for several months as dresser in a military hospital in Europe. The ball she found in Herman's stocking. It had extracted itself; and, though it had previously danced a good deal in his system, as a ball sometimes will, she thought that it had spared his bones and vitals altogether, and that the loss of blood would, if he was strong enough to bear it, be of service in preventing inflammation, provided he kept perfectly quiet in body and *mind*; and he might be sure that Sister Agnes Alexis, and she, would take the best care they could of him, and do their part, *if he would do his*.

Having delivered herself thus scientifically and diplomatically, she took the key from her pocket, requested Mrs. Dobbs, nothing loth, to take charge of her patient for ten minutes or so,—and to lock the door after her, as she did not wish him to be disturbed,—and informed him that if he stirred before she came back, it would be at the peril of his life. She then slipped quickly out, reclosed the door, and left him to such comfort as he could find between his soft band-

ages without and his hard struggles within, while he lay, longing to collect all his remaining life into one effort, to leap up, burst the door, and throw himself at Constance's feet, if it was only to die there, and yet fearing to compromise, he knew not how grievously, "Sister Agnès Alexis."

As Sister Mary Peter expected, she no sooner came into the passage, with her little lamp in her hand, than she came upon her young colleague. Constance was kneeling in the dark on the boards, with her hands clasped, almost knotted, over her heart. She sprang up, and caught Sister Mary's arm.

"He is doing very well, my dear, at present, at least," said the latter, replying to her speechless gesture; "and now come out with me. I must ask you,"——

"And I must tell *you*!—Sister, I don't forget my vow; and if the blessed Virgin and you will help me, I won't break it; but I *must* see him and be with him now; and if you try to part us before he is out of danger, I *cannot* answer for the consequences. You must know,—no, I shall not go away!—he might die;—we will whisper,—your ear.—Mr. Arden,—this gentleman,—was my lover; but we quarrelled and parted."

"Whose fault was that?"

"Mine. He was as upright and warm and true a lover as woman ever had, only too good for me. I wished to govern him in matters I knew nothing about; and he had too much spirit to submit to it; and so we parted. I thought that I had made him cease to love me; but I see now that I have not; and I know, that it could have been only despair which drove him, as it did me, to this fatal, fatal place. Now, do I not owe him some amends?—his life, if my



care can restore him?—a happy death, if,—oh, heaven, have pity on us!—he must die? Stay in this house, Sister Mary! Stay, and go in, and let me go in with you and tend him till he is out of danger, or out of this weary world; and then I will allow you to take me away with you, wherever you will, to any one who needs us more. He is too honorable to tempt me to break a solemn oath, whatever you may think of me. Stay and be merciful, as you would have St. Peter show you mercy in your need! I shall control myself perfectly before the people of the house, and him, and everybody else; and so will he, when you tell him how much depends upon it.”

Constance hurried through these sentences, almost in the time of any single one, that Sister Mary had ever heard from her before. Her tears of grief, terror, and entreaty, flowing as fast as her words, had meanwhile become a perfect rain, and were rapidly thawing the not very hard or cold heart of the experienced elder, who liked a bit of romance when she could honestly come by it, and who, besides, began to consider that, while getting her out of Herman's way by *finesse* was in the circumstances impossible, any attempt to do so by the exercise of authority would probably fail, and also bring about the very exposure of the novice's feelings, which it was desirable to avoid. Constance's hitherto resolutely unflinching, implicit obedience, moreover, had led the sagacious old lady to apprehend that her mutiny, if she were ever driven to it, might be extremely formidable; but it also encouraged her to believe, that Constance could still command herself in this, or any, emergency, provided she saw it to be worth her while.

Just as Sister Mary Peter showed signs of waver-

ing, and Sister Agnes Alexis redoubled accordingly her half-menacing entreaties, it happened in her favor that the key clicked in the lock, and the door opened. Herman, with the cunning of utter helplessness, had shut his eyes and feigned sleep. Mrs. Dobbs, tired of silence, and suddenly recollecting that certain rolls must be turning to bricks in the oven, peered out to seek a substitute. Constance, seizing her advantage, flashed in like lightning, with Sister Mary at her heels, flew to Herman, looked in his eyes, and put water to his lips, but laid her finger on her own, while her colleague took the word :

“Mr. Arden, [so Constance had told her who he was,] as Sister Agnes Alexis has told me of your old acquaintance,” said Sister Mary, looking at him significantly; (so Constance had told her how they stood with one another! Just like her, artless, noble-hearted creature! How much better it looked than concealment! How much more to the credit of all parties!) “we both think it may be a comfort to you to have her assist me in taking care of you;”—

“God bless you!”

“Talking, at present, will not be good for you, sir;—and I have consented, understanding from her that you are an honorable man, who will make no effort to turn her mind from her duty, when her vows call her away to the service of others who need her more. That will hardly be, of course, till you are better, provided you are patient and docile, so that it is in our power to do you good.”

Herman bowed his pillowed head, looking very grateful. They understood one another pretty well. She felt for the young sufferer, and would gladly do for him all that she could, consistently with fidelity to the obliga-

tions which bound her; and more he must not, and would not, ask. She would suffer them to pass what might be his last earthly hours together, under the sanction of her presence; but it must be upon her own terms; and that was all that she could do for him. She had them in her power; and he must and ought to submit. A young Sister in her charge might tend a sick man blamelessly; but she must not listen to a lover.

So the slow hours crept on. The Dobbses masculine came audibly home in their tramping cowhide shoes, tramped up stairs, and anon breathed stertorously. Mrs. Dobbs knocked for the last time at the door, brought in a plate of cold baked pork-and-beans and pumpkin-pie for supper, stared at Herman, requested "Miss Peter" to "jest please mind the lamp didn't drop no sparks," and withdrew to her dormitory. Then the long, unbroken night ranged with clicking footsteps round and round the face of the old eight-day clock, while the unfortunate young people,—so long parted, so soon to part again, perhaps forever!—sat and lay in each other's presence, under the Argus eyes of their keeper, with parted hands, and sealed lips, and bursting hearts,—bursting with a struggling chaos of love, wonder, hope, and dread.—How much had each to ask and to tell! Must they part again, and leave it all unsaid? How soon? When should they meet again? As these questions, with a chorus of similar ones, rushed through Herman's brain, his pulse throbbed higher and higher.

To one of them, he felt at last as if he must have an answer, or die. Beckoning Sister Mary to him at midnight, he whispered, "Is she bound for life?"

"Oh, no, my son!"

“For how long?”

“A year.”

He cast towards Constance an inexpressible glance of relief and delight, closed his eyes, fell asleep, and awoke the next morning with a sense of such unwonted and childlike lightness of heart, that his first idea on seeing the bare rafters over his head was, that he was a happy little schoolboy again, spending a vacation at Sea Farm; and when he would have raised himself to look about him, the weakness and stiff soreness, which checked him, did but remind him that he was a happier man; and, as he sank back upon his pillow, it was with an ineffable sense of thankfulness and joy, which recalled to him the words, “Verily I say unto you, there is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake and the gospel’s, but he shall receive an hundred-fold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions, and in the world to come eternal life.”

His sound sleep, which he stood in great need of, having had none for forty hours before, recruited his strength, reduced his fever, and cleared his head. He was now able, in some degree, to take his case under his own consideration; and his opinion, as well as Sister Mary’s, was very encouraging to himself and to Constance. It was further confirmed by that of Dr. Coffin, the physician who had been with him the night before in poor Robbins’s cabin, and who looked in upon him in the course of the morning, in great amazement and some wrath at seeing his late able, active, and blooming assistant, so quickly turned into a pallid, meek-faced, helpless patient. He was much struck by the spectacle of Herman’s resignation, which certainly

was most edifying, and was exceedingly kind, and ready to do all that he could; but he was very busy and hurried, and his fingers were much bigger than Sister Mary's, and his touch harder and heavier; so that Herman was glad, on more accounts than one, to hear him compliment her merrily upon her skill, and declare that she had done and was doing all that was necessary, and that unless the symptoms changed, or she desired a consultation, he believed he need not meddle much further in the business, though he would look in as often as he could get round that way. All that Herman required, all agreed, was good nursing and quiet just now, and good feeding presently. His good health and condition would do all the rest for him; and, for himself, he was afraid now only of getting well too fast.

He wanted no change. He would have liked only to stop the clock, and make the earth stand still. What health was, or could be, like illness watched by Constance? She said little; she could do nothing, but now and then bring him cool draughts or keep the flies away, for sister Mary left her nothing else to do; but that was enough. She sat for the most part with her eyes cast down; but that gave him only the better chance to keep his own fixed undetected on her face. He gazed silently until, in weariness and weakness, he could gaze no longer, and the beautiful vision swam away into dreams of her. He could not bear to think of losing one moment, in her presence, of

“The sober certainty of waking bliss;”

but when he awoke with a start, and looked to see that she had not fled with his dreams, amends was made him for his unwilling slumbers; for, before she had time to look away, he found that she in her turn was gazing



upon him ; and thus, sometimes, for an instant their glances would meet. So the bare "best-chamber," with its unpapered walls and floor painted yellow, its narrow strip of blue carpet before the hearth, and green carpet before the door, and chalky plaster vases on the mantel-piece, full of hectic apples and jaundiced oranges, was, to one of its tenants at least, an Elysium ; and so the first day passed, and the second.

But, on the third, the unhappy Herman could not but perceive that he was better. What a vexation it is sometimes to have a fine constitution ! His trials had begun with a particularly good and long night's rest. In the morning, he could not keep himself from having an excellent appetite for all the toast and tea, that Sister Mary would give him for breakfast ; she would give him only a quantity altogether too moderate to afford him the smallest chance of getting up a little more fever ; and his pulse had run down, in the course of the night, most unreasonably. He hoped once in the forenoon that it was quickening again ; but that was only because Constance brought him some flowers ; and, as soon as she turned away, it was provoking enough to beat only a sort of Dead March. He was recovering about twice as fast as he had expected, or as almost anybody else would have done in his place ; and when Sister Mary, on dressing his wound, reported accordingly, she seemed to expect him to be glad of it. It was all very hard, and could not be helped ; but the hardest and least to be helped of all was, that Marshall, who had heard some rumor of what had happened and been trying in vain to discover his *whereabouts*, did discover them, and came to see him in the afternoon, and told him that he should repeat his visit in the course of three or four days, as

soon as he could be relieved from his duty, stay with him until he was well enough to travel, and then accompany him at least as far as was necessary, on his return to Boston. He even went so far as to mention this plan before Sister Mary. She approved of it highly, declaring that the business of her mission required her elsewhere, and that, if Herman continued to improve as fast as he had begun, he would need nothing, after the end of the week, but what his friend could easily do for him under the occasional direction of a physician.

Poor Herman had nothing to say.—It was certainly the best arrangement that could be made. Ned could not come for him. He was gone to the Adirondacks, where no summons would reach him. Clara would and must soon hear of his situation, and could hardly fail to be much alarmed and distressed until she saw him. Constance could not be expected to remain with him, after the first exigency was passed.—He said nothing accordingly; but he thought a good many things, and among others made the very improper reflection, that the very most odious feature in some arrangements is, that they *are* so manifestly the best, that nothing can be said against them.

Marshall was again looking very ill himself,—quite as fit for a patient as for a nurse. He was to travel for some weeks for his health. Dr. Bayou had given him a “sick certificate.” Herman did not have to tell him the end of poor “little Sophy’s” story. He made no inquiries; he had heard it already, and had had the additional pain of great anxiety about his friend; for a pencilled note, which Herman sent to him as soon as he was able to write it, miscarried; and he had only vaguely heard that he had been wounded, whether mortally

or not was not known. There was an expression of despairing, moody suffering about him, very painful to witness or to think of. Time might mitigate it,—or aggravate.—Remorse is a disease of most uncertain prognosis. There is but one specific for it; and that, the sufferer is very often unwilling to try.

Herman could not sleep that night until late. He was glad to while away some tedious, restless hours, and drive away some unquiet and disquieting thoughts, by making Sister Mary chat with him. He rather liked her. She had a quaint queer mind, with an odd mixture in it of shrewdness, subtlety, and simplicity, and had seen much of life, both in her present vocation and in her earlier days, as a member of rather a fashionable family in Baltimore. If she had not been so formidable and insurmountable an obstacle to an immediate explanation between himself and Constance, he thought he might even have grown fond of her. Her only fault as a nurse was, that she was too faithful. She scarcely left him by night or day, except for a few moments, when the hospitable Mrs. Dobbs paid him one of her three or four daily visits; and when she did go, Constance always went with her. Sleep seemed to be with her rather an occasional indulgence than a necessity of nature; and now having, as she did regularly after the first night of danger and uncertainty, sent "Sister Agnes Alexis" off to bed at an early hour, she was, as usual, sitting bolt upright at his side, in a plain old-fashioned high-backed chair, in which she dozed a little now and then, with the spotless cape-bonnet canted waggishly awry, and one eyebrow set up, as if in token of readiness in the eye belonging to it to open at the slightest notice. He coughed slightly; the eye opened instantly, and so did

its fellow, and her mouth, with the prompt inquiry whether he did not lie comfortably, or would like to have her move him. He asked her whether she was sleepy; she of course promptly denied the charge; when he suggested that he was not either, could not make himself so, and should be glad to have her talk to him. She was all obliging readiness, and disposed to begin with converting him, but could not proceed far in that direction, before he treated her in return for her motherly care,—ungrateful fellow!—to a little filial sauciness.

She informed him with much fervor, that the very night before she found him, the Virgin Mary had appeared to her in a dream, with the North Star in her hand, and foretold to her, that the very next day she should fall in with a young heretic, born under that star, who should be saved by her nursing from immediate, and by her teaching from eternal, death.

The device was so temptingly transparent, that on the spur of the moment he could not help rejoicing, that on that very night, though he owned he could not now remember it, he was sure that St. Peter must have appeared to him, and told him that the Pope had stolen his keys, and that before he could get them back again, Herman must make an excellent Protestant of an excellent Sister of Charity. “An old one,—not a young one!”—he ejaculated with a frightened after-thought, heaping insult on insult to poor Sister Mary, in his anxiety lest she should imagine that he entertained any present designs against the faith of his lady-love. Then, perceiving the unintentional rudeness into which he had been betrayed, he colored piteously, and was mute, and quite confounded.

Sister Mary told her whole rosary before she looked at

him again, which probably, if she was angry, answered the same purpose as "counting a hundred" before she spoke; for though, when she had done, she shook her head at him, it was very good-humoredly. He begged her pardon for his levity, but added in sober earnest, that he thought it hardly fair that he should hear his creed attacked, unless she would promise him in return a candid hearing of all his arguments in its defence, which she could not do, because they were "temptations of the old boy, my son!" Their theological conference, therefore, ended where it began; but there were collateral matters about which he was eager to ask and she to tell, though she might have chosen to *taboo* them in the presence of the younger and less-confirmed devotee. She was the first regular *religieuse* with whom he had ever talked; and he was much struck with the specimen of active, ardent, joyous beneficence, and animated, vigorous, occupied old age, which she presented. He begged to know, what was the most common motive with those who embraced her profession. (He was too delicate to ask what her own had been; though he longed to do so, for she bore in her intelligent face the remains of much beauty, her temperament was evidently a peculiarly cheerful one, and he believed that without some property she could not have secured admission to her order.)

"Well, my son," she replied, crossing herself devoutly, "of course there may be subordinate motives in many cases, of many sorts and kinds. Some Sisters may have been crossed in love, I dare say;—we don't talk about those things much;—but I hope the chief motive, in all cases, is the wish to serve the Lord. It ought to be."—She paused; "you want to say something."—



"I did wish to ask something; but I am afraid you would think it was of a piece with my impertinence just now."

"No; I shouldn't think any more about that. Ask away."

"Cannot women 'serve the Lord' without forsaking their domestic duties?" He expected the stereotyped and, as he thought, generally perverted reply, "Whoso loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me;" but he did not get it. Right or wrong, Sister Mary had, upon that subject, some notions of her own.

Her smile was a little bitter, but with a kind of tonic bitterness, like wormwood sweetened, as she replied, "What the Protestants are always saying behind our backs, no doubt! Many thanks to one of you for saying it to my face, and giving me a chance to answer it! A girl may go and get married,—no matter how many duties she leaves behind her, nor how much she's wanted in her father's house,—and go to the world's end with her husband; and, if he's rich, her friends haven't a word to say; and if she really can be spared from home, and loves him, I haven't, either; for marriage is an honorable and holy sacrament appointed of God; and if, when her lover'd got her heart, she held back her hand from him to turn it to the service of the church, Satan might tempt her with dreadful regrets and lookings back, which won't do at all, for our rule requires zeal and a single heart. If she *don't* like her husband though, I must think,—whether I say it or not,—that she'd have done better, instead of marrying him, and setting up another private misery-factory of her own where there were plenty of 'em already, to devote herself to God, and go about helping some of the number

less troubles that have sprung out of just such marriages. But if she wants to do that, all her friends find their tongues at once, and set up a terrible outcry about her domestic duties.

“When I was out in the world and read vain books, there was a story in one of them about a sort of a fairy,—Peri Banou, seems to me, was her name,—our Lady forgive me for remembering such stuff so long!—but she had a tent that would stretch out to fit a thousand people, or shrink up to fit one, just according to the number it had to fill it. Now, when I hear that sort of talk about domestic duties, I’m apt to think they’re just like that tent. One woman, if she has a good head and pair of hands of her own, and a few servants, can keep house for ten men; but if there’s only one man in a family, and ten women, ’twill take ’em all just exactly the same to keep house for him; and not one woman of ’em all can be spared,—except it’s to be married, or do something else that’s the fashion,—from the *stretchy* domestic duties.”

“But do not the different women in a family owe some duties to one another?”

“Of course they do, while they stay in the family; and of course, if they can’t be spared, they ought to stay in it, and not leave it to be married, nor anything else; but what I have to say about it is only just this: If one of ’em can be spared from it at all, and is going to be, isn’t it fair she should be allowed to take her choice between leaving it for the service of God’s poor or, of the world?”

“It would seem so, indeed. I never thought of that before.”

“Yes,” pursued the old lady, warmly and volubly, “but she mustn’t do that, whatever she does. It would

be so undutiful, so unnatural, so unsisterly, and so-forth ! But, if she's rich, she may stay where she is and do nothing, and welcome ; and when she's got so tired of that, she can't stand it any longer, she may marry a man she doesn't love, and learns to hate ; and if she passes the rest of her days dismally, in rearing discontented, wayward, wicked children,—who would never have been born to sin and suffering but for her,—for a tyrannical father, in a home of strife and manages, with all her efforts, to undo a tenth part of the mischief she's done, by and by, when she dies, somebody'll write a beautiful obituary about her, and put in, ' She hath done what she could !'—I've read enough of such in my time. I've seen enough of such marriages."

She stopped ; but it was evidently for breath, not words. Herman's attentive eyes asked for more. It is usually an agreeable thing, to an intelligent observer of life, to be allowed to take an observation of it from the different point of view of another intelligent observer. She went on : " You are a young man, Mr. Arden ; and, as you said, I am an old woman ;"—

" Comparatively," said the wretch. " Older than the other Sister, I thought. She is *very* young."

" Old enough to box your ears, sir, if you give me any more of your nonsense !—older than her age and yours put together. Yes, I shall be sixty-nine years old, if it please the Lord to prolong my evil and sinful days six weeks longer."—

" I should not have imagined it," said Herman, with perfect sincerity.—

" And not ashamed to own it, if I'd only spent my time better. As it is, I've seen a good deal of married life, and thought about it a little, too ; or I might have entered into it,—well, half a dozen times over, at least."

“Among the Mormons?”

“No. I’d have choked any lover I ever had,—if I’d married him,—I’m sure, in the honeymoon.”

“Oh! the ‘Female Bluebeard’!”

“Just so,” said she, absently. “Three kinds of marriages there are, my son;”—she counted them on her fingers;—“the first, that’s rare;—that’s made in heaven;—they say that all are, but that’s because they don’t know;—the second,—that’s common enough, I hope,—made on earth;—the third,—that’s common enough, and too common, I happen to know,—made in the other place, and a trap-door to jerk folks down into it! You understand?”

“Partly; but I wish you would be so very good as to let me have your commentary.”

“Well, the last and worst speaks for itself; and it isn’t necessary, nor charitable, to say much about it. It’s when people, who are naturally aggravating to each other, marry from interested motives, or from a mistake that they find out when it’s too late, and don’t try, as they ought and as some do, to make the best of it; and the tie between ’em is like a bunch of thistleburs between the manes of two colts, that pricks, and goads, and tears, and crazes, as long as it sticks ’em together. The middle one, I said, was made on earth; that’s when all that the Jenny-bird wants is a nest, and a mate to feed her in it; and she don’t see much difference between the first that happens to twitter to her and the others, provided he knows how to feather his nest and bring in plenty of nice things for her and her young ones; and their tempers chance to suit each other on trial; and he minds his business, and she minds hers; and they get used to each other, and bill and coo when they meet, and are happy enough apart

to be sure, but rather happier, after all, when they are together.

“And the first kind?”

“Ah! that I know less of. You’ll find out about that for yourself one of these days, I hope,—that is, if you marry at all, Mr. Arden.”

“Thank you,” said Herman, pressing her hand cordially; “but may I not hear a little about it beforehand?”

“True boy! an’t you? You must suck your orange a little, at least, all the morning, if you *can’t* cut it till the clock strikes luncheon-time! Wait and leave a drop or two of juice in it, I advise you.—The last, I can only guess at; for the best kinds of happiness don’t show much on the outside. But, if I must say something about it, I suppose it is when two people, upright and blameless towards the rest of the world, are,—God, who made them so, only knows why,—peculiarly pleasant and delightful to one another,—really *are* so, and don’t merely fancy they are till they can’t help themselves, and then change their minds;—when they’d rather sit side by side in a barn than apart in a palace, but yet are too kind to each other to marry till they can afford something better than a barn to sit in, for, when the wind comes in the cold cracks, comfort and peace are apt to fly out together; when the very foot of the one, ‘as he comes up the stair,’ as the old song says,—I used to sing it,—‘has music in’t,’ to the other, more than the tongues of all the flatterers in the world; when each always brings out what is happiest and best in the other, and each character gives to the other just what the other wants; and the man grows tenderer and all the nobler for that, and the woman nobler and all the tenderer for that; and so the two



human souls mix in each; and they strengthen, and sweeten, and hallow each other, into two blessed blessing guardian angels.

“Now, Mr. Arden, young folks will be curious; and I dare say you wanted to know, and were too polite to ask, how I came to be what I am. Humanly speaking, to tell you the truth, I believe it was because *I* was disappointed in love,—such love as that. I see you’re pricking up your ears, my son; but you’re doomed to be disappointed yourself, if you expect to hear any romance from such a matter-of-fact old woman, just as the girls are when they tease me to tell them my story. God has all kinds of ways and means to drive and draw perverse souls to his ends. It wasn’t in any lover in particular that I was disappointed, but in an opportunity to enter into that last sort of wedlock; and luckily I had sense enough to feel, that neither of the other two sorts would do for me. I had offers enough,—I may say without vanity, now that the time for ’em has been gone by for some more years than you’ve lived;—and more shame for me, for I was a sad flirt, and drew men on when I oughtn’t; and I liked this one for this, and that one for that, but no one for everything, and many for companions, but no one for a master. I was a wild unruly thing enough, in those days—not what you’d call a bad-hearted girl, I hope, but thoughtless and lawless, and bent on nothing but amusing myself, and having my own way. I hardly went near my director more than twice a year. I’d run down a whole square if I saw him coming, to get out of his way; and if he sent for me, and I had to go, I’d have so little to confess to him, that he’d say, ‘Do you mean to tell me that this is all, my daughter?’ and then I’d answer, ‘Why goodness gracious, father, no! How

can you possibly expect me to remember half?" When he set me my penance, I used to forget it before I reached home or, at all events, before I'd done it ; so he had to write it down for me on a piece of paper ; and then I lost that, and was afraid to tell ; and I ate meat fast-days half the time, and did and left undone everything I oughtn't, just in that heedless way ; and all the while I was dressing, and dancing, and riding, and singing, and laughing, and talking, from morning till night, with a pack of other young folks of my own age, just as frivolous and flighty as I.

" Well, that was very pleasant for some years ; but pretty soon they began to pair off and go, the boys into their offices and counting-rooms, and the girls into their nurseries ; and I had to find myself younger companions, or go without, which was not quite so agreeable. However, I made the best of it. I was called handsome then ; and my spirits were high ; and the brother I lived with (I was an orphan) was pretty wealthy, and pretty extravagant too, I'm afraid, and kept open house ; so that I was surrounded with silly fellows enough of all ages, and enjoyed myself tolerably well some years longer ; but that couldn't last always, and I began to have my trials at home. My brother's own family was large, and growing larger ; and so were his expenses. His wife was rather quick-tempered ; and so was I. The children took after us both in that ; and, though he was naturally rather fond of me than otherwise, he began to think we were rather too many for one house to hold. So he *would* encourage the visits of two or three old *beaux* of mine, that I'd led on and then refused, and who of course, it didn't give me any particular pleasure to see, in hopes I'd change my mind. And when he saw I'd have

nothing to say to 'em, it would sometimes make him cross.

“That made my home—his home I mean,—uncomfortable ; and when I went out to change the scene a little, it still weighed on my mind, and spoiled my spirits ; and then I wouldn't always receive as much attention as I liked, or was used to. The night I was twenty, I had a regular cry, I remember ; and the next ball I went to, there were some gay little creoles there from New Orleans ; and all the good partners were running after them. I had only two invitations to dance that whole evening ; and at supper-time I was quite forgotten and left by myself ; till one of the slighted gentlemen I told you of spied me, and seized his opportunity to say, ‘I think you'll have to make the most of me, this time, Miss Caro.’ I had to take his arm, and go in with him ; because I didn't know what else to do. I didn't choose to have it appear that I was overlooked. But I was so angry, that every mouthful he gave me seemed to stick in my throat. When I got home that night, I sat down on my bed opposite my glass, and let down my curls all around me, and said to myself, ‘So, my dear, they want to put you on the shelf ; that's plain ! I'm sorry for it ; for I don't see that you look superannuated at all, and I'm sure you don't feel so ; but I don't see what we are going to do about it.’

“After that, I wouldn't go to any more parties ; but I didn't find that my home grew much pleasanter. How I did long to be independent ! But marrying seemed to me to be an odd contrary way to bring that about. I had about five hundred dollars a year of my own, to be sure, and might have taken cheap lodgings for myself, somewhere ; but I thought 'twould be so

dull and lonesome for me ! I had always been used to see everything pretty and cheerful about me, and a good deal going on ; and if my relations weren't always very good-natured to me, nor I to them if the truth must be told, their voices and footsteps round me were a good deal better than nobody's.

“How I did envy, those days, the little country-woman who brought us in our eggs, and butter, and fruit, in her little waggon, twice a week. I rode out to see her place once. She was a farmer's widow, and had an orchard, and pasture, beautiful cows, and a pretty garden, and took care of them all herself, with a younger brother, who lived with her, and one or two servants. She bustled about, and churned, and gardened, and picked her fruit, and milked her cows, and drove her pony to and from town in the fresh early mornings. She had plenty of work and plenty of amusement, neighbours coming and going all the time, and a pleasant word for everybody, and a pleasant word from everybody, and was laying up money all the time, to spend as she liked. But, bless you, my son, you know that, even if I hadn't been brought up not to know how to do much, it's contrary to nature that a *lady* should do anything for her living. It's as much as she can do, and more too, sometimes, to get leave to work for other people ; and I had no great inclination at that time to exert myself for anybody else. My heart was all bent on self and the world. I'd have worked with a good will and all my might, to make myself well off in this life ; but I hardly ever thought anything about the other.

“When I was a school-girl, there was a poor old maiden lady I used to call Aunt Ruthy, and go to see very often, and carry her flowers whenever I had a

*bouquet*; because I pitied her so. It's almost the only good thing about me then, that I can remember. She was so grateful, poor soul!—she loved me dearly, and would tell me all her troubles. Girls like to hear other people's, before they have any of their own. She had just about enough money to pay her board and buy her caps, but nobody that belonged to her, and nothing to do. She was a timid, moping thing naturally, and couldn't do much to help and cheer herself; and she couldn't endure solitude. It killed her at last. She went crazy, and died in an asylum; where I thought, when I went there to see her, she seemed happier than she ever did before she went in. When her acquaintances could make it convenient, they'd ask her to come and stay with them, out of charity; and then I would see her creeping round, so pale and meek, in other people's houses, always taking the worst of everything when she helped herself, and only the second best when other people helped her; and though she had been brought up as delicately as any of them, I've known that woman actually go down into their kitchens, among their strange servants, and do up muslins, or make cake, or anything else, just so that they might find her useful, and not want to get rid of her so soon; and she would stay so long, that at last they'd think they must give her a hint;—a very little one would do, and mortify her half to death besides, for she had very lady-like feelings;—and then she'd go back to her dismal little room, and take to her bed, and cry for a week; till I found out she was there, and ran in to make her laugh and cheer her up. Now, I had always said that, whatever I did, I wouldn't be like Aunt Ruthy.

“But one day, when I came home from spending



a week with a married school-mate in the country, and was just going to run up stairs with my shawl and parasol, my sister-in-law put herself in my way in the drawing-room door, and whispered in a hurry, coloring up a little, 'Mr. Carroll has got your chamber, Caro. My sister and her children had the west-rooms, and we didn't expect you back quite so soon; so I told Phillis to put your things into the third-story lumber-room, and clean it up nice for you; and we'll have the porter up in the afternoon to move out the trunks and boxes. There's a beautiful view there over the roofs; and husband says we must have another spare chamber.'

"I didn't say one word. It seemed to take my breath away. My chamber was my nursery, where mamma used to come in, in her beautiful ball-dresses, to kiss me and tuck me up evenings before she went out, and my brothers used to bounce through the door when school was let out, and throw down their satchels and toss me up in the air. I'd slept in it all my life, and felt as if 'twas almost as much mine to live in as my own body.

"I walked up the three flights of stairs. The room had been swept and dusted; and Phillis had laid all the old pieces of carpet and matting smooth over the bare floor, and stacked up the boxes and trunks in one corner as well as she knew how; for I always gave her my cast-off finery, and she was fond of me. But,—dear me!—how I did feel!—like a steamer with her safety-valve screwed down. I wonder I didn't blow up, with my pent-up feelings. There wasn't a soul I would say a word to; and I couldn't even cry, for fear they'd see my red eyes. 'Well,' thought I to myself; 'wait a bit, I'll soon catch up with you. Here's the first step, Aunt Ruthy.'

“That afternoon, I ordered my horse, and rode out alone, wondering how long I’d be allowed to keep him, and thinking enough, you may be sure. When I came near home,—we lived just at the edge of the city,—not being in a great hurry to get back to the lumber-room, I reined him in on the brow of a steep little hillock, and sat still, looking at the sunset. One of my little nephews, who was always playing some prank or other, shot him with a blunt arrow, out from behind a bush. He started; and, as I caught up the reins tighter,—he was very spirited, and used to hunting,—he leaped with me down twelve feet sheer, and stood still, trembling a little. I did not fall; but I felt my head terribly hurt by the *jar*. My brain seemed crushed to a quaking, aching jelly. I grew dizzy and blind, and laid my face down on his mane, and clasped my arms round his neck, in hopes he’d carry me of his own accord to his stable, where they’d know me and take care of me. Little Bobby came out, crying terribly. He was my pet, and didn’t mean any harm. He only did it out of fun. He led me home, begging me, all the way, not to tell. I never did.

“When they saw me, they were only too glad to carry me back into my own chamber; but I had something else to think about. I’d rather by half have been safe and sound in the garret. The doctor came; and, by the measures he took, I knew he thought the case was pretty serious; but they wouldn’t let me see a priest, for fear ’twould agitate me; and how could I have confessed, if he had come? My memory was oddly affected. I could recollect things as well as ever, but often not words; and when I could, I used them half the time at cross purposes.

“I went to sleep, and dreamed I had died. My

soul flew up, light, like a balloon, away from the earth, while I tried to hold on, first by the grass, and stones, and bushes, and then by the trees, and chimneys, and mountains, and then the clouds, and rain-bows, and sun, and moon, and stars; but each and all they slid away, one after the other, from my slippery fingers; and up, and up, and up, I went, and presently I was on high among the four-and-twenty elders, and the sea of glass, and all that you read about in the Apocalypse. Then the Lamb that was in the midst of the throne opened its mouth, and began to speak to me, and order me to give an account of my deeds done in the body. I thought and thought, and tried and tried, with all my might, to remember one good thing to tell; but I couldn't, to save my soul; and then I thought I'd hold my tongue, and not say anything at all, and that would be next best; but the truth seemed all at once to begin to move and stir underneath it just like a worm; and I found it would speak of itself, do what I would; and then I heard it say, 'I haven't done anything at all, but be an idle, godless flirt, and a cumberer of the ground!' 'There,' thought I, 'young woman! Now you've done it!' I looked round for the Virgin to say a good word for me; but she hid her face in her hands, and burst into tears. Then I seemed to begin to go down again, down, and down, and down, head foremost, in the dark;—for I'd been struck blind by the light of Heaven, because I hadn't been in the habit of looking up to it to get used to it;—and I heard a great wide hiss coming up under me, nearer and nearer, and felt a horrid heat on my forehead, growing hotter and hotter. But then I woke up in my own bed, frightened out of my wits,—and all the more because I couldn't speak intelligibly, to tell anybody what the

matter was,—to find that the noise was only the buzzing in my ears, and the heat the flushing of my face; but, as to the rest, I couldn't explain it away quite so easily.

“A few days after the doctor said to me, in a new way, as if he meant it,—they'd been trying to make me believe it, all along, but I knew better,—‘You're doing well!—quite out of danger.’ ‘Not quite,’ thought I, ‘yet! I've got a reprieve; and I'm glad enough of that; but we're all under sentence of death; and, when least we think of it, in comes the warrant. I mean, for one, to be better prepared for it the next time!’

“He had got a little Sister of Charity, to come in and take care of me through the worst of it, and for a week or two after; because he thought I needed more skilful nursing than I was likely to get otherwise; though my sister-in-law, I'll do her the justice to say, was terribly shocked, and as kind as could be. I dare say she always would have been, if she could only have had her own house to herself. It may sound like an Irish bull, Mr. Arden, but all my experience and observation has gone to show that family union isn't promoted by too many branches of a family crowding together under one roof. I don't say it mayn't be necessary for 'em sometimes to do it; and, if the Lord ordains it for 'em, He can make a way for 'em to bear it. But it's a temptation; and, where they're at liberty to choose, I'm sure it's better for 'em to meet now and then with pleasure and good-will, than to live together with discontent and mutual annoyance.

“My nurse was one of the best women I ever saw, and just like a mother to me. When she left me, I missed her so, I didn't know what to do; and as soon as I could walk out, I called to see her. She was put-

ting up work for some bright-looking poor girls, with another Sister to help her, as brisk and pleasant-looking as she was, in a cheerful, snug, sunny little parlour, with geraniums and tea-roses growing in the window ; and I could hear little children's voices saying hymns in the next room. ' Dear me, Sister,' I sighed out, ' how happy you do seem !'

" ' So I am, my dear,' says she, ' thanks to a good God, who brought me here ; but you mustn't imagine I didn't have my trials out in the world, as well as other folks. When my poor dear husband died, the whole earth seemed to me like a great lighted tomb, with me sitting alone in it, and all the other people racing to and fro round me and chasing after shadows ; and I thought the din, and glare, and emptiness, and vanity, and solitude, would drive me crazy. But I found the poor and sick were good company for me, after all. I could forget my own troubles in thinking about theirs ; and it's strange how much easier to bear other people's troubles always seem, than one's own. Besides, I learned to take theirs on my shoulders ; and so, when I could relieve them, I got relief myself. Religion's a great comfort.'

" ' Religion !' said I, ' my goodness ! You don't call that a comfort, do you ? Why 'twas that, and nothing else, that made me cry and tremble so that night, when I woke up, and couldn't tell you what the matter was ! Why, I think it's the most awful thing in the whole universe !'

" ' That can only be when we don't live according to it, my dear,' said she.

" ' I'm going to live according to it, henceforth, at any rate,' said I ; ' but I don't expect I'll ever find it very entertaining.'



“She took me out with her, though, as soon as I was strong enough; and we went round together among her poor; and I was pleased to see how they looked up to her, and loved her. She gave advice to one, clothes to another, and dressed a cut or a scald for another; and I emptied my little purse, and bought flannel, and cotton, and lint, and a couple of oranges for a poor man that we found gasping with consumption up in a hot attic under a stove-pipe. I shall never forget the feverish, famished, thankful look, that he snatched them with. I never bought anything scarcely that gave me so much pleasure. I always did pity the poor when they came in my way.

“I liked the Sister’s busy, stirring way of serving God. The contemplative life wouldn’t have suited me. I told her I believed I would be good, if I could only live with her. She said, ‘I hope you’ll be good, my dear, live where you will.’ But I couldn’t. Some saints have led holy lives, to be sure, in the midst of distractions. There’s nothing grace can’t do, if you only have it. But then there are all sorts of gifts; and some are fittest for one thing and some for another. When people are just beginning their lives, if they only begin straight it must make it a great deal easier for ’em to go on so; but I was no chicken, and had a whole host of bad habits, that everything about me helped to keep up. I wasn’t particularly ill-disposed, that I know of; but ’twas my nature always to be up to something; and if it didn’t happen to be a good thing, then it had to be a bad. It had got to be second nature with me, whenever I was in company, to be either vain and coquettish, or jealous and envious; and, at brother’s, I was all the time in company, or else wasting my time and money, dizenning myself

out for it. Besides, you know, it wasn't convenient for him to keep me much longer.

"When I could see my director, I had a long full talk with him, about my concerns and difficulties,—how I needed a new home, and wanted to lead a new life, and get ready for death; and finally, when he didn't seem to know what to propose, I hid my face between my hands, and whispered through my fingers that I wished I could be a Sister of Charity; but I wasn't good enough.

"How he did jump! 'You must be good, whether you are one or not,' said he.

"'To be sure,' said I; 'If I can't be good enough for a Sister, I will never be good enough for an angel.'

"When he found I was in earnest and eager about it, he put me on probation, and spoke to my brother. He was willing, and rather glad, I fancy, after the first surprise was over. But they all agreed I must stay where I was a few months more, till I'd entirely got back my strength; and my director told me, I must make the most of the time to repair past errors in my family, and leave all in peace. So I did. We parted at last as good friends as brothers and sisters should be; and I've been thankful for it ever since. I tried to do my very best in my noviciate. They made it a long one; because I'd been such a skittish thing; but at last they decided that my vocation was genuine. So I took the vows; and I've never repented it; and it seems to me now, that I've become a different creature. Doing seemed to help me in praying; for I knew the Lord loved the poor; and when I'd been trying to serve them, I felt as if He'd been working with me; and for the first time in my life, I could turn to Him as

to a Helper and Leader and Guardian, instead of an angry Judge. Ah, sir, if you'd be converted, and become a priest, you'd know."

Herman at that very instant dropped asleep, instead of answering; but he had never been less inclined, than then, to enter into the Romish priesthood; and, when he awoke the next morning, he was, if possible, still less so. Sister Mary Peter's recital had so far tinged his dreams, that they had been filled with scenes of beneficence; but everywhere, in well-known garret, hospital, jail, and cellar, the semblance of Constance had been leaning on his arm or busied at his side, aiding him to comfort the sorrowing, tend the sick, lead back the erring, and lift up the fallen; and, just as the unfeeling Shanghae cock crowed under the "best-chamber" window and waked him up, he and she, having done a good day's work together, were going chattily and merrily up the steps of a small, newly-painted house with "Dr. Herman Arden" on the door, at the corner of two busy thoroughfares, to a snug little parlour where a cozy late *dinner for two*, of her ordering, must, they knew, be awaiting them.

In spite of this mishap, he expected to see her again, as usual, as soon as his morning *toilette* had been with Sister Mary's assistance completed; but she did not come near him till noon,—not till he had become seriously alarmed lest Sister Mary, or some jesuitical ally, had surreptitiously spirited her away;—and when Sister Mary, finding it impossible to pacify him otherwise, went after her and brought her in, she sat shyly by the window, bending over some knitting, said nothing even to Sister Mary, except when she was spoken to, and, in the course of an hour, made her escape again. He could hear her, through the thin, loose partition behind

him, faintly singing, in her chamber, low chants and Misereres.

This conduct of hers did not greatly astonish him. He reminded himself that a convalescent could not expect to be treated with all the indulgence accorded to a probably dying man; and he knew the exceedingly sensitive delicacy of Constance's character well enough to fear that, now that the danger was over, she suffered from the recollection of the emotion which she had been surprised into showing, at the unexpected sight of him and his danger.

But her conduct, and the latter explanation of it, made him only the more eager for an opportunity to relieve her mind at the same time with his own, by a full declaration of such ardor of unchanged attachment, on his part, as should throw hers completely into the shade. They might now be separated almost any day; and the dread of her leaving him, and leaving him in ignorance of her plans, and in utter uncertainty as to when and where he could meet her again, was becoming from hour to hour more intolerable. Added to this was the idea of the influences which might in the meanwhile be brought to bear upon her imaginative and excitable mind, and of the possibility that, under a superstitious and mistaken sense of duty, she might already have determined against so much as listening to a suit which her poor defrauded heart seconded,—if, indeed, it did second it; for even this was more than he knew,—and, to all this, his helpless inability to take the case into his own hands. Even if he had been well and strong enough to rise, dress, and go to her,—which he was far enough from being,—he was on *parole*, most clearly implied if not expressed, with Sister Mary; and after all that she had already done for him, he felt that

it would be doubly disgraceful to get her into a scrape.

Though a strict guardian, she had not been in any respect a harsh one. She had kept him very still till his fever went down; but, during the last day or two, she had allowed a great deal of pleasant general conversation. It was conducted in a parliamentary manner,—she being Mrs. Speaker, putting the questions, and having the answers ostensibly addressed to her,—yet so managed as probably in a great degree to meet the wishes of all parties concerned. Herman had talked, and Constance evidently listened. When he could not see her eyes, he could see her color come and go. Sister Mary had considerately and dexterously drawn from him just what the silent novice was most likely to wish to hear,—some account of his late occupations and way of life, and the present situation of his family,—finding an excuse, perhaps, for the gratification of her own curiosity in gratifying that of her *protégée*. He also had learned from her something of their movements, and how they came, just at the right moment for him, to be in Kansas.

They had been sent on a mission, to see if there was need of, and a good opportunity for, the foundation of a charity-school there, and had been boarding for a few days with Mrs. Dobbs. They had heard of the skirmish in which Robbins was killed, gone to the nearest village to see whether their services were required by any of the wounded, lost their way and been belated in returning, and come upon Herman when there was just twilight enough left for them to see his form by. They had previously been very near being sent to New Orleans to nurse the yellow fever. Herman's hair almost stood on end, as Sister Mary mentioned it;



but Constance raised her eyes, and they shone. She had liked it, evidently. So young,—so out of love with life! Would she like it now? He longed to ask her. Sister Mary spoke of it very calmly. She was growing old, she said. She must soon leave the world, at any rate. She would rather, if she had her choice, be active, and go about, and wait on others to the last, than live on to a time when she must be idle, sit still in her chair, and have others wait on her. She should be glad to think that, when she could no longer serve the Lord by her life, she should serve Him by her death. But she felt as if she might still have eight or ten years' work in her; and so she was not sorry, on the whole, that it had been put off for the present.

"Where were they to go next?" Herman had asked, with unwary abruptness. Sister Mary had been loquacious as to the past. As to the future, she was virtually dumb: "It was impossible to say. Where they were sent. Wherever the Lord had need of them."

On the evening of this "day of misfortunes," Herman, being further goaded, and at the same time in a manner set free from restraint by Constance's absence, made an impassioned appeal to the compassionate Duenna.

Sister Mary, sorry as she was for him, declared that she had done already all that she could for him, and more than she could answer for to her conscience, or, she feared, to her confessor. They should not have stayed at all, if she had known that Herman was going to get well.

He begged her pardon for having done so, but adroitly, though sincerely, suggested, that his getting well was probably in great part owing to her staying.

This was manifestly her own opinion, though veiled

with elaborate humility. But she made his convalescence an argument with him for his being too thankful, now that his life was restored to him, to care about anything henceforth but spending it well.

This being a view of the state of affairs which he could not fully embrace, he ungratefully adjured her to tell him, at least, how long it would be before "Sister Agnes Alexis's" year of service expired.

"Well,—less than a year, my son."

"But, how many months?"

"Why,—not a great many, my son; but, if you wish to live to see the time, you must avoid excitement. You had a bad night last night, in consequence of too much conversation yesterday; and,—if you'll excuse my noticing it,—I think that may be the cause of your being a little fractious to-day. Shall I close the shutters for you to take a little rest now?"

"No, thank you.—Will it be many weeks?"

Sister Mary was seized with a fit of deafness, which was the more remarkable, that her hearing was usually peculiarly quick: "Tea very weak? I will go and get you some stronger."

"If you do, the instant you are out of the room, I shall spring out of bed, and halloo to Mr. Dobbs to bring me my clothes."

"Mr. Arden! Are you beside yourself?"

"To be sure I am!—My dear, good, kind Sister Mary, I wouldn't be, if I could possibly help it; but do only consider! Miss Aspen—Sister Agnes Alexis,—and I have been so perfectly frank with you from the first moment of our meeting, that you must know even better than we do ourselves, how we stand towards each other. Because she is an honorable woman, and because I am an honorable man, we have

now been the greater part of a week under the same roof with one another, in these very trying and peculiar circumstances, without exchanging a sentence of what can be called explanation. It shows what good faith we have kept with you, that, on the fourth and perhaps last day of our stay together, I should still have these primary questions to put, and put them to you. How can you possibly, with all your knowledge of human nature, think that it can be in *my* human nature to let you carry her off, without knowing where, to be exposed, for anything I know to the contrary, to plague, pestilence, and famine, without knowing even where, nor how soon, I can take measures to see her again? I don't mean to go near her until she is free, provided I can only make sure of finding her then; but, by hook or by crook, I must keep hold of some clue to her, if it is only by following her about the country, and not losing sight of her, wherever she goes; otherwise, at the moment she is released from her vow, she may be hundreds of miles away from me, and renew it days or weeks before I can get at her; and so again the next time, and the next, till I have spent all my days in a wild-goose chase after her!" Herman groaned, as Sister Mary had never heard him groan before.

Much moved, she put a useful suggestion in the form of a rebuke, exclaiming indignantly, "Well, then, sir, I'm very much surprised that you do not apply to some of her relations. They are the proper persons to go to for information, of course."

"To whom, ma'am?"

"Why, her Aunt and Uncle Ronaldson, I said, at Baltimore."

"Oh, yes, I remember."

“And you will be good and patient, my son?— I would be sorry to think we had lost all our labor; and if you attempt to rise at present, or travel too soon, you must know yourself that your wound will inflame, and you will be worse than ever.”—

“If I can,” said Herman, with something of the querulousness of an invalid; “but I must make sure of being on the spot, in time to speak to the Sister; and if you will not tell me when that should be,”——

“I’d tell you anything I could, my son, with all my heart; but you must see yourself, that it isn’t the thing for me to be making appointments of this sort.” Herman did see it, and owned it; but he sighed, and stirred restlessly; and she went on, “You needn’t hurry, at all events. Mrs. Ronaldson is travelling just now, I know, and not to be at home till the end of next month. And I give you my word, that that will be soon enough for you, and too soon. If you were in Baltimore now, you couldn’t do anything about your business till some time after that.”

Herman thanked her for this and all her kindness, as warmly as he had expostulated with her a few minutes before, gave her fifty dollars for her charities, begged her to call upon him if it should ever be in his power to render her any service, and told her that he should always believe that, under Providence, he owed his recovery from the only two illnesses of his life to “his *two sisters*.” Sister Mary had heard enough about Clara before, to feel rewarded.

The next morning brought Marshall, his baggage, and Dr. Bayou, who was now to take the chief supervision of Herman. At noon, Sister Mary brought in Constance, to say good-bye. She did not say it. She did not speak. He held out his hand. She did not

seem to see it, turned, and went out. Sister Mary, for the last time, bent her tall old form over him, arranged his pillows, and strove to make him comfortable in her kindest and most motherly way. But the pain, which he was now enduring, was beyond her power to relieve. She saw his pale young face full of strong anguish strongly borne; and he saw actual tears in her cheerful eyes. Coming back again, and smoothing the counterpane, she whispered, "Take heart! take heart, my dear! 'Twill soon be over. Trust her to me. I will watch over her as if she was my daughter, or you were my son." He wrung her shrivelled hand, and kissed it. The door was shut. He was alone.

He heard a horse's hoof stamp impatiently on the loose gravel underneath the window. Perhaps *she* was there. Perhaps he might have one more glimpse of her yet. Could he stand?—He could try. Claspings the bed-post with both hands, he cautiously lowered his feet to the floor, got hold of the back of the high-backed chair to support him, and pushing it along softly before him, reached the window in spite of the swimming of his head. He peeped between the closed shutters cautiously, that he might not be seen. A white-covered butcher's-wagon was standing beneath. The restless horse had turned, so that the opening at the back of the wagon diagonally fronted the window. Just as Herman looked out of the window, Constance looked out of the wagon. She could not see him; and he saw her the longer. There was a "divine despair" in her eyes. Then she raised her handkerchief in her hand, and bowed her head to it. She loved him! He would have given his heart's blood to be permitted to dry, with his own hand, those tears that she was shedding. And yet,—strange inconsistency of love!—those



tears of hers, which he could have wept to see her shedding, were a greater comfort to him than than anything else could give ; and on the memory of them he was to live henceforth for many a day.

Sister Mary came out, and climbed into the modest chariot. Mrs. Dobbs followed to the wheel with vociferous farewells. Silas Dobbs scrambled up in front, and whipped up Dobbin ; and the wagon vanished behind the barn before Herman grew too blind to see. If he fainted now, it was no matter. Getting from his bed was all that he had to concern himself about. How he was to be got back, was other people's affair. Not preferring to be caught at the window, however, he made, as often as he regained strength and consciousness sufficient, sundry efforts at locomotion and, at the same time, with the legs of the chair upon the wooden floor, sundry unearthly noises which speedily brought Marshall, who was eating his dinner below, to the rescue.

He was rather astonished at finding his usually rational charge in the middle of the floor, astride on a chair, and clinging to the back of it with both hands, with a very pale face over the top ; and his first idea was that Herman, in a fit of delirium, had been indulging himself with a

“ Ride a cock-horse

To Banbury Cross,

To see an old woman jump on to her horse ;”

in which we, who are in the secret, perceive that he was not altogether wide of the mark ; except that the woman was young, and in a wagon. Getting very little explanation from Herman, he took him in his arms, put him to bed and, as soon as he appeared capable of comprehension, suggested to him that, if he had a fancy

to sit up, he had better at first try being pillowed up for a little while where he was, or at any rate wait till somebody came to assist him, to which Herman meekly assented. He showed no more signs of any such fancy for several days after.

The clock had struck twelve. Cinderella was gone, without even leaving him so much as her shoe! Oh, yes, though! There were the flowers she had gathered for him. He must press and preserve them; and doing this and gumming them in arabesques and wreaths upon paper, as he had seen her treat some in former times, afforded him occupation enough for two or three days after he really became well enough to sit up in bed. But the strange, sweet, *bitter-sweet* episode was over. The palace of Dainty-Delights was disenchanted. He perceived that the apples were hectic, and the oranges jaundiced, that the green carpet did not harmonize well with the blue, nor with the yellow floor, and that the lath-and-plaster walls had no paper for him to while away his restless hours in studying. He next proceeded to discover the truth of the theory, that women make better nurses than men, but yet that Mrs. Dobbs must be one of the exceptions that proved the rule; for she could no more make Sister Mary's place good than Marshall; that serious illness was a state often less trying than convalescence; and that it was singular what a difference physical weakness could cause in one's power of attention; for though the Messrs. Dobbs were all of them intelligent yeomen, and had much to tell him about the state of affairs in Kansas, which was authentic, and no doubt important, he knew no more about it, after they had been hospitably trying to entertain him with it for an hour, than when they began.

The Kansas doctor, on his next friendly visit, was less impressed with Herman's resignation than with his affording a remarkable illustration of the fact, that few men, no matter how skilful they may be in general, can understand their own cases. "I never, Captiving Dobbs," declared he, "see or conversed with a youngster that had more information, or what you'd call a better general idee of physie and surgery, than that there, up stairs; but here he's been remarking to me, that he expects to be able to travel next week. Leevetenant Marshall, if you let him try it, I guess you'll repent of it, and him, too. He's a dead man if he doos, as sure as he lives."

The opinion of Dr. Bayou coincided in substance with that of Dr. Coffin, though not in language, being expressed in the purest Mississippian, of which I regret that no specimen has been preserved for me to lay also before my readers, for a comparison of dialects. Herman submitted himself, with the best grace he could, to the decision of his medical brethren; but his good constitution and habit of health now came to the aid of his wishes, and extricated him safely from their hands before long, and much sooner than they expected, in spite of the drawbacks of homesickness, restlessness, and irrepressible anxiety; and he quitted Kansas, after all, with a much lighter heart than that with which he had entered it.

## CHAPTER XIV.

## THE LADY'S SHRIFT.

“My queen was crouching at my side,  
By love unsceptred and brought low,  
Her awful garb of maiden pride  
All melted into tears like snow.  
The mistress of my reverent thought,”——

THE ANGEL IN THE HOUSE.

AFTER Herman's return to Boston, he was much of the time in spirits so mysteriously high, that Edward declared it must be a cure for despondency to be shot through the body, and that if he were entrusted with the care of an asylum for the insane, he should certainly make targets of all his melancholy patients. This remark of his deserves recording for this reason, though for this reason only: it was the nearest to a sportive, not to say a good-humored one, that he made at this time and on this occasion. Quite contrary to his wont, he was in a state of gloomy and taciturn indignation; and, from his unusual reserve, it was difficult to discover whether he was most angry with the Border Ruffians for having shot Herman, or with Herman for having been shot.

Even this, Herman bore with remarkable cheerfulness. Perhaps Constance's tears had watered his hopes, and they grew so fast as to over-top all minor annoyances. He was, however, restless and incapable of settling himself to anything long. As soon as he was well enough, he resumed the care of his patients and some charity pupils whom he had; but his own

studies seemed almost at a stand-still, while he obligingly read aloud to Clara more novels and poetry than, on her own account, she had ever perused in her life. To the great improvement of her bloom, he rode with her so fast that she often wanted breath to protest against his speed; and he had scarcely apologized for his offence before it was repeated. He romped with Tom and Bessy, until they pronounced that he had grown "the funniest man in the world,—a great deal funnier even than Uncle Edward."

At the same time, as if for a counterpoise to all this, he brought home to Clara one sombre book after another upon monachism, mediæval art, Romish saints, &c.; till one day she asked him whether he meant to decoy her into a convent, and rewarded him by singing in her very archest and prettiest way, a snatch of the old song, "Oh, is it not a pity?" with its burden, "No, I won't be a nun!"

Upon this he informed her, with unaccountable and rather depressing solemnity, that he seriously believed there was a great deal more of unearthly excellence and saintliness among the charitable orders of the Church of Rome than the Protestant world had ever given it credit for; after which, he went off without loss of time into the very brownest of brown studies.

"Will you go out to walk with me?" asked she at length, finding him dull.

"Yes," said he, looking up blankly into her face, "I shall go to Baltimore, myself."

"*Shall* you?" returned she, laughing, "but I shall not. It's rather far for a stroll; and, besides, I shan't trust myself there with you at present. There are too many convents there. I might find myself in one



before I knew it. I beg your pardon, though ; I forgot that that seemed to be a tender point with you, when I touched it just now. I dare say many of the nuns are most excellent and interesting."

" 'Convents !' 'nuns !' " cried he, rousing himself ; " I did not say anything about them, did I ? Why should you imagine, that they had anything to do with my going to Baltimore ? "

" Why, I did not ! Have they ? Are you really interested in them ? "

" Oh, " said he, " relieved, and endeavouring to recollect himself, " there are a great many objects of interest in Baltimore. There is an Athenæum, a monument to Washington,—and,—I believe,—a bank, and, "——

" Toy-shops and confectioners'-shops, I dare say, " suggested she, demurely. " Never mind. Don't task your memory. I can look for my old Worcester's Geography, the next time I go to the garret, and find out all about it, no doubt. When do you visit this interesting city ? "

" Oh, —next week. Have you any commands ? "

" Only to come back safe and soon. Herman, I don't want to ask you any questions that are not necessary, but this one I must, because I have been so frightened about you so lately : It is no dangerous errand that takes you to Baltimore ? "

" No, indeed, my dearest, no ! You will know all about it some time, perhaps ; perhaps, very soon. "

" That is all I wish to know, until you wish to tell me. " Clara said this in perfect good faith, with respect at least to any mere selfish inquisitiveness on her part. The vulgar general charge of idle feminine curiosity is sometimes brought by their inferiors against

women, who rather deserve praise and admiration for their eager and anxious sympathy, and solicitude for the welfare of those very persons who ridicule them for it. Any serious attempt at concealment between Herman and Clara was, however, a thing so unprecedented, that she presently caught herself instinctively trying to unriddle it:

“Transparent young cheat!” thought she; “how he stammered and blushed! It must have been about something more than my thoughtless banter about his monastic hobbies,—unless he is really getting Romanized. Herman could not! I might have been afraid of it a few years ago; but now, with all his fancy and fervor, he has too much knowledge and clear, sound, strong good sense,—unless the Roman Catholics are right, after all; but Dr. Lovel declares, and knows how to prove, that they are not; and so does Herman, too, I dare say.—Imagine him starving and whipping himself, and going down on his knees to confess all the crimes that he never committed, to a great, ignorant, puzzle-headed, ‘exile of Erin’ of a priest! I don’t think there can be much danger of that.—He had hardly time enough to fall in love while he was gone; and besides he went nowhere near Baltimore. And then I don’t think he is ready yet to fall in love with anybody except that absurd Constance. He seldom cares to speak to any lady here, except me. *Can* she have changed her mind, and he found it out? She had relations there! And can he think of placing himself at her mercy again? I hope, if so, at any rate, that by this time she has learned better how to prize him.

“Ah, Herman! Herman! Why cannot we go on, just as we are, without any change in our peaceful, pleasant home? Why is it, that for even you, who

know so well how to win and return a sister's affection, a sister's affection cannot be enough? Yours and Edward's makes my life so sweet and blessed! Why is it that, when almost all men who have sisters can command a sister's affection, a sister's affection seems enough for the happiness of scarcely any of them? And, yet more, why is it that so many of them seem to disregard, if not to spurn it utterly? They do not treat their sisters as equals,—still less as companions,—still less as they do their friends. They make them useful when they themselves are in sickness, want, or affliction; but when they are well, wealthy, and happy, they leave them to themselves, and to their vacuity and loneliness; and so the poor, uncherished, forsaken, shaded things, (unless fate sends suitors to see, fancy, and carry them off to brighter and warmer homes than their own, or unless they have a rare faculty of finding sunshine for themselves,) are too often blighted, mildewed, and frost-nipped, and become scare-crows in appearance, and nothing very cheerful in reality. I have seen enough of it, since dear compassionate Herman taught me to open my eyes to the condition of those less fortunate than myself. God send him happiness, and Constance, too,—made worthy of him,—if she is essential to his happiness! I don't know how I could ever forgive her for having made him so wretched; but, at all events, I could try for his sake. Perhaps he had reason to think she would relent, but would not say so, for fear of having afterwards to complain to me a second time of disappointment. [A pretty good guess, that last one, Miss Clara!] But what am I about, to sit here, prying into his thoughts after this meddlesome fashion? As soon as he ought, he will tell me all that he ought; and until then, as I told him I

do not wish to know." Clara found that she had worked a whole crimson tulip wrong in her *tidy*, and addressed all her powers resolutely to the wholesome penance of picking it out.

Herman went to Baltimore ; but whether or not he remembered to visit the interesting bank, monument, and confectioners' shops, never transpired. It is, however, I regret to say, certain that he did not lie in ambush under the house of St. Tabitha, drug the watchmen, scale the walls by night, and bring Constance down a rope-ladder out of a three-story window ; nor did he break into a secret conclave of Tartarean ecclesiastics, and demand his Eurydice back with a moving mixture of threats and pathetic entreaties, at the risk of being let through the floor into the cellar, like one of the Ravels, by means of a trap-door conveniently disposed under the carpets for the purpose ; nor did he hide in one of the pews of the church of St. Nostrum, bounce out, and drag his lady-love from the altar, on the occasion of her being dragged to it by opposition captors to renew her vows. It would have been much more appropriate to a romance, and accordingly much more convenient to me, if he had done some one or all of these things ; but by that strict adherence to truth and nature, for which I am distinguished, (or mean to be, one of these days, if I can,) I am forced to own, that how romantic soever in his feelings, he was apt to be sadly commonplace in his doings.

He procured an excellent letter of introduction to Mr. Ronaldson, made acquaintance with his wife, and when he had found out what a thoroughly good, warm, open heart she had, and also had reason to think that she had granted him a little corner of it, he opened his

own to her. The devotee in her struggled a little at first, faintly, with the woman, but had to yield before long, and yielded entirely to her natural sympathy with youth and love. She gave Herman her best wishes and advice, and made up her mind that she had never quite thought her dear niece had found her vocation. About his seeing her? Oh, he should see her in her [Mrs. Ronaldson's] own house, of course. Constance was coming to pass two or three days with her as soon as she returned from Georgetown; and that would probably be next week. Her year had just expired. She was waiting only for Sister Mary's company. Constance was to write and let her know what day to send the coach to the cars. She would send Herman word; and he had better be at her house, and make sure of an interview at once.—Any opposition to his seeing Constance, on the part of her superiors? Oh, no, she thought not. She would be very sorry to think so. But, then, dear Constance herself was ardent, and sometimes a little wilful, (though that was chiefly before her conversion, and ought not to be remembered now.) She had been very strongly bent on going into the Sisterhood;—nothing could stop her;—and now she might have scruples of conscience of her own, about letting herself be turned from that line of life. Mrs. Ronaldson would send for him; and he had better be on the spot. Herman was not unwilling.

The coach rumbled to the door, and stopped. The tall, Diana-like figure all in black,—the same that had haunted the farm-house in Kansas,—reappeared, and darted into the hall, into the arms of Mrs. Ronaldson. They kissed each other, billing and twittering together like two Canary-birds for full five minutes. Herman,



in ambush, peeped through the crack of the parlour-door. He could not have waited so long, but for the necessity of avoiding a *dénouement* before the coachman and Sambo.

"Oh, *dear* Aunt Cora, how dear you are! How sweet it is to see one of my own family again! How good you are, to let me come back to you once more!"

"How naughty you were, you wilful darling, ever to go away and leave me! How could you do so?"

"Indeed, I don't know. I've wondered a great many times. Give me another kiss,—two,—and hold me tight! Oh, I never knew what a darling foster-mother I had, nor how ungrateful and shameful it was for me to say I was all alone in the world, till I had run away from you!"

"Come, come into the parlour, and let me take off your bonnet. It's all damp with the rain."

Constance hung back. "Do you think there can be any of my own dresses up-stairs, Aunt Cora?"

"I am afraid not, dear; you gave them all away, did you not?—There, that will do, children! Run up to the nursery. Go down and tell the cook to make some muffins, Sambo."—

"I'm afraid I did. I shall feel so odd and conspicuous in these before people; and, besides, I hate to see them myself."

"What! Why?"

"They remind me of my wilfulness and folly. Aunt Cora, it is of no use to try! I can no more be a *Sister* than I can, a seraph!"

"Why, Constance! Why?"

"Oh, because,—it does not suit me. I'm *not* good enough. I mean to do good part of the time; but I want to do something else besides, and draw, and play,

and read my own books, and think my own thoughts, without always *meditating*. I'll be the children's governess, or anything you please, if you'll only let me stay with you. Is Uncle Henry in the parlour?"

"No, dear. Come in."

Herman met her on the threshold. He thought she would have fallen. "Why are you here?" exclaimed she, not knowing what she said, with her white lips scarcely stirring.

The low, spontaneous answer broke from him with equal abruptness, "Because I love you!"

"Children, children," cried Mrs. Ronaldson, "come away from Cousin Constance this moment, all of you; she is tired. No, no, Jenny; off the sofa,—up to the nursery. Mammy Philly has the nice warm water all ready; and we will have such a frolic! Constance, my dear, you'll be so kind as to excuse me for half an hour, I'm sure;—my children's bath.—Skip, Bobby, mamma will catch him!" Gathering her brood together, like a hen who sees a hawk, Mrs. Ronaldson swept, with them before her, through the door and shut it, leaving the *coast clear*.

Herman and Constance, meantime, saw nothing and heard nothing but one another. They stood face to face alone again, for the first time since that miserable morning in Boston, more than three years ago.

Then Constance dropped like a broken idol on one knee before him, covered her face with her hands, and burst into a tropical deluge of tears: "No, no! Let me stay here! It is the proper place for me! Ah, Herman, noble Herman! why were you so true and I so unworthy! No, don't ask me to rise! My wicked pride deserves a penance, and shall have it! I have knelt to other men since I spurned you,—the guide

and counsellor that Heaven ordained me,—and asked for their forgiveness for lighter sins; and now,”——

“Miss Aspenwall!—Constance!—oh, dear Constance! Don’t let me see you so! I have taken you by surprise! Forgive me! Oh, you shock, you grieve me!”

“I will never do that again, at any rate,” said she; and trying to check the sobs, which shook her whole frame, she allowed him to raise her and lead her to a sofa. “But if I confess myself to any one, I am sure it is fit that I should do so to you, oh, my patriot, my hero, my true-love!—far truer to me than myself!—whom I wronged, and agonized, and repaid with my childish scorn and anger for being only too lofty and heroic for a spoiled and senseless thing like me to understand! If you want revenge, you shall have it.”

“‘Revenge!’ on you?—my dearest! my own heart! I don’t. I want nothing but your affection, if you can only give me that. You are over-tired, and,”——

“Yes, I am over-tired, and deserve to be, of following out my own wild will; and *I* want revenge, if you do not, on my mad pride and passion, which have made us both so wretched!”

“Both! Were you ‘so wretched,’ too? Oh, Constance, Constance!”

“Was I not? Did you think me so heartless as well as senseless! Well you might, indeed! But to have to go away and leave you, in that wilderness,—among strangers,—perhaps to relapse and die! Oh, what *could* you think of me?”

“Would you like to know what I *did* think of you?—that you were an incarnate blessing, sent to me by Heaven in the time of my utmost need; that your infinite compassion could be bounded only by your loyalty to duty; and that the very memory of your pres-

ence, when you were gone, was as an amulet to preserve me to devote myself to you ! I kept myself up as well as I could with that, and with the hope,—the fixed determination,—to see you soon again, and *make* you mine if it was in the power of mortal man to do it ; but in spite of all, when you were gone, Constance, you cannot imagine how I felt !—as if my very being would be crushed inwards with its own emptiness !”

“Can I not ? You shall hear. I loved you, Herman ;—I did not know it, but I did love you at the time,—in Boston,”——

“Oh, Constance ! You *did* love me ? And now ?”

“No—less,” faltered she, pausing ; and then she broke forth again, “I liked you always, and Clara, and Edward. I was always happier and better with you, than with anybody else I ever saw ; my mind and heart and whole soul felt at home with you, I could not tell why ; but, indeed, I never knew how I loved you, Herman, till after that day when you stood before me so pale, and brave, and strong, showing me how much,—how over-much,—you loved me, and yet how you could do without my love. I was ill soon after ; and even when I tried,—and it was long before I did,—to remember all that passed between us, I could not, with any clearness ; but that look of yours,—that fond, firm agony,—I could not forget ; and I could not help admiring you for it, even when I thought you in the wrong ; but when I found that I had been a fool and, for the climax of my disgrace, the fool of tyrants !”——

“My Constance ! Do you mean to say that you can not only feel for me, but feel *with* me, now ? My God, I thank thee !”

“Herman, indeed I can ! You may well wonder at it. It needed very much to break down my igno-

rance and arrogance; but the ruffian, who struck Sumner down bleeding on the Senate floor, struck with the same stroke the scales from my eyes, as I believe he must have done from those of hundreds! Then I knew my pet institution by its fruits. A system, which had for its arguments the blows of a bravo and for its tongue, a bludgeon, could be little akin to my cherished Patriotism and Liberty. Chivalry and the South, indeed! As I read the news on a stray scrap of newspaper, in which a child had brought some fruit to one of the Sisters, I thought of you. 'So Herman was right!' I said. I blushed, and turned literally sick with shame, as if I had seen instead a published account of my treatment of you; so that the Sister Superior saw, took the scrap from me, looked it over, and asked me whether either of the parties was a relation or friend of mine."

"Oh, Constance, you could think of me, and yet become a Sister of Charity?"

"I was one already to all intents and purposes. I had entered upon my noviciate, and taken a private vow; and I was glad then that I had dropped out of life, and left my name and all behind. 'What can he think of me now?' I said to myself. 'Nothing, but that very likely I am one of the *ladies*, who are at this very moment getting up subscriptions, to buy new clubs for that—representative of the South!—to break on the grandest heads of my countrymen!—Herman's own among them, perhaps. I am disgraced,' I said, 'and my South is disgraced; and the sooner I am out of this weary wicked world, the happier for me;' and I asked leave to go with Sister Mary; because we heard that the cholera was in Kansas, and I thought that I should like to die in the service of the sick Free-State



people there. It seemed to be the only reparation to your cause, that I had it in my power to make; and,—I did not in the least suppose that you would ever care to hear of me again; but I thought, that if you *should*, I should like to have you hear that.”

“My own love! How could I have borne to hear it? How could you suppose, that I could ever for a moment forget you? How could you ever consent, for a year or a month, to put so fearful a barrier between yourself and me? Could you not have served God among your friends and kindred, in some happier way?”

“I am afraid I did not care so much as I ought about serving God,” murmured Constance, her pink cheeks blushing between her delicate fingers, like roses through snowy icicles. “You must not think me as good as you are, Herman; or you will despise me for a cheat when you find me out. You shall hear the whole story, as you have a right to do, as fast as I can summon up resolution to confess how poor a part I have played. But, first, you must hear how hopeless and dreary I was; for that is my only excuse. As for happiness, I might have found it here, perhaps,—I might have done so, certainly, if I had been less spoiled, wayward, and exacting,—if I had not loved, and known what it was to be loved again. As it was, I was spoiled, wayward, exacting, and,—yes, I *will* own it!—it is due to you,—broken-hearted!”

“My own precious Constance! You broken-hearted, too!—and I not here to comfort you. If I could but have guessed!—When one word would have brought me so enraptured to your side!”

“But that word,” stammered she, “was one that I

could not say. It was mine to chide you from me;—not mine to bid you back again. No matter; perhaps I would not have done it, if I could. No; I am pretty sure I should not. I was possessed by the evil one; (for people may be, even in our times, Herman. I believe in that doctrine firmly, shudderingly. God grant he may be cast out now!) She crossed herself and shivered;) “and even if you had thrown yourself at my feet in those days, I believe I might have spurned you again,—who knows?—though, in order to do it, I trampled on my own soul. I said to myself, ‘He has been tried in the balance and found wanting; let him go! I am happy enough without him; or, at any rate, I am going to be. I must occupy my mind, and forget the whole matter.’ Then the question arose, How occupy my mind?

“There appeared to be nothing for me to do, but to go out a good deal; and accordingly I did that. I received a great deal of what is called attention; and ladies told me, that gentlemen had said that I was very handsome. What comfort was there in that? So were many very unhappy or even very despicable persons; so was Eleanor,—I must learn not to mention names when I am going to be spiteful,” said she, interrupting herself with a sobbing laugh,—“who had not, I believed, an idea in her head, except that she was the greatest beauty on this continent, or a feeling in her heart except a longing to have the fact frankly and explicitly stated to her on every occasion. Very soon I began to grow tired, and to say to myself, ‘I have had enough of this. What next?’ I could not see any *next*, or at least any that I found any comfort in contemplating. Oh, Herman, it is a dreary thing to stand, a girl of nineteen, on the very threshold of life,

and see before you nothing but death to look forward to!

“Even what I had in possession, I could not keep. The young men were proud of walking and dancing with me, just as they were of driving a fine horse, and discussed me, I suspected, much as if I had been one. ‘She is a glorious creature!’ I was told that they said and swore; but I knew that in five years’ time they would probably say it with less emphasis, and in ten change it into ‘She *was* a glorious creature,’ or forget it altogether. One always wants a prospect of something, some gain, some growth,—some permanence, at least; and I saw no prospect of any in that direction, even if it had been worth having, which I doubted.

“In hopes of a hint, I looked about me to see what other old maids were doing. Some of them were dressy and chatty, and seemed to be contented and satisfied; but it was with much the same things that the young maids were doing; and of those things I was weary already, and expected to be still more so before ten years more were gone. Then there were others, old maids *par excellence*, whose chief function in life appeared to be, to be dowdy, useful in certain dry ways, and ‘content with their sphere;’ but their *sphere*, so far as I could see, was nothing but an exceedingly flat *round* of duties, that nobody else chose to do;” and again Constance laughed with that sobbing laugh, half-tearful, half-mirthful, like a lost child, that has been sought and found by a kind older brother, and is telling him about its wanderings.

“Altogether I did not like the looks of the future at all, and tried to throw myself into the present again, as fast as I could. But I was worn out with mere ball-room prate, and sometimes wished to talk of things

more interesting than my neighbours' flirtations, clothes, and suppers. Some people stared and answered at cross-purposes; and others assured each other solemnly that I was very intellectual. 'What of that?' I said to myself, 'What good does an intellect do you, unless you know what to do with it? What comfort was Samson's long hair to him, when he ground in the mill?' 'Why don't you write a book?' they said; but I never like to write often or long; and, by that time, through idleness and dissipation, I had lost the control of my own mind, if I ever had any, and did not know how to set myself to work or to keep to anything steadily; and then,—I *will* humble myself to tell you this, Herman, to give you some satisfaction for the pain which I inflicted on you, too, by my arrogance!—in my inaction and vacuity my inward griefs had completely, and in spite of me, got the upper hand. My heart was growing so full of the tears which I was too proud to shed, that I feared that if I did write, they would burst through my pen, and trickle over all my pages, and every one would know the sorrowful secret, which I was so anxious to keep from every one.

"I took a disgust to society and tried music next, to make the time pass and keep me from thinking; but it did not keep me from feeling. I often played seven or eight hours a day, and left off only because my heavy fingers flagged on the keys; but then I often cried. Herman, I do not see how music can ever do much for worldly and selfishly unhappy people; because it awakens spiritual longings, which only heavenly and holy affections can fill.

"At last, I believe that I must have become really morbid; for I spent half my time sitting with my

hands folded at the window, gazing into the street, and speculating on the faces of the women passing by. I did not care particularly to study those of the girls; for I knew that animal spirits, hope, and thoughtlessness, were enough for most of them; but I pored eagerly and as long as I could, through the blinds, over the countenances of the middle-aged and the old, to read their fortunes in them. When I saw one go by with a proud, glad look, I said, confidently, 'She has a kind husband, or a fond, true lover. She steps quickly. She knows that the time seems long to him, while she is out of his sight. Perhaps he is sitting in some window, and looking out for her, as,—not as,—I am now. Perhaps he is waiting for her at the nearest corner. Life is short. Why should they waste a moment of it, needlessly apart?' When one followed with a contented, cheerful, domestic look, I said, 'She has a cheery, kindly home to go to, with plenty of sociable brothers and sisters in it, if she has no more.' When another came, somewhat pale and worn, but with a sweet, calm, and earnest expression, 'She may have had her trials; but, if so, she must have had somebody to support and strengthen her under them,—good old parents, very likely, who, having passed through the sorrows of life before her, know how to feel for her, soothe, encourage, and guide her, while she in return takes heart and keeps her spirits up, that she may the better cheer and cherish their old age.' But when I saw a woman pass, with a haggard, withered, drawn, defiant face, I said, 'She is alone in the world;—an orphan, with no brother or sister;—and her lover is worse than dead. She has no hopes, and bitter memories from which she knows no refuge. She hates life, and herself, and all the world. She is embittered,



soured, cankered, as I am going to be,—as I am now.' At length, one day, I saw two Sisters of Charity,—one of them majestic, and, though old, still beautiful,—both looking happy. That was a reproach to me; for I supposed that they had no domestic ties, nor anything but the unselfish service of God and man to make them more contented than myself; and I arose, and left my window."

"But, my own dearest, were you so utterly alone? I cannot bear to think of it. Had you no friend? You were here, were you not? Surely, surely, Mrs. Ronaldson must have been kind to you?"

"'Kind!' Indeed she was!—much more than that! Incredibly kind, it seemed to me, when I looked back, after toil, hardship, and real homelessness, had begun to bring me to my senses. She was as affectionate and tender towards me as I would let her be; but at the time I fear that I really took it only as a matter of course," said Constance, blushing like a fair cloud at sunset. "It seems to me that I did use to take it as a matter of course, that all around me should be devoted to my worship and service. When they were so, I fear that I merely did not notice it. When they were not, I felt it as an outrage. I knew nothing of life then. All my notions of it were drawn from fiction and my own selfish fancy. I was the *prima donna* of my opera, and did not see that other people were made for any other purpose than to play accompaniments or sing seconds to me. I bewailed my loneliness; but I believe it was more than half my own fault; for I *did* like to keep everybody at bay with my haughtiness. A brother, sister, father, or mother, might be made a picturesque accessory to the grand central figure of a heroine. A kind, indulgent, attentive aunt, was quite

too tame and homely a character to be held under consideration for a moment; and,"—Constance's long curled eye-lashes drooped till they over-hung her blushes,—“I know that I did not esteem or appreciate Aunt Cora at all as I ought. I despised her; because she had less taste and time for idle accomplishments and day-dreams than I; and I thought her commonplace; because she was so absorbed in her little household and social cares,—in trifles, I thought then,—in her duty, and promoting the welfare and happiness of others, I see now. Oh, it seems all so long ago,—as if I was talking of what I was in some preëxistent state, or of some other person;—and indeed I must have changed very much, or I could never have humbled myself to acknowledge such ingratitude and folly! Don't you think so?” asked she, with the eager, pleading look of a contrite, docile infant, who, after a repented fit of naughtiness, begs to know, “Am I good now?”

“I do,” he returned, with a fond and not very credulous smile, “if you ever were such a person as you describe. I think, further, that you have learned to turn the satire, with which you used to make me laugh at others, against yourself. I could rather weep at it now. Spare her whom I love best.”

“Truth is the truest satire for some persons,” said Constance, vengefully, but looking well pleased, notwithstanding; “she deserves mercy through your intercession, who had so much on you. You shall hear the worst of her before you give yourself to her,”—

“Excuse me,” cried he, playfully. “The information comes too late. She has me already beyond recall. In pity, don't make me discontented! The best that I can do is to make the best of my bad bargain.”

“We have talked enough of so unfortunate a subject, at any rate, for once,” said Constance; “and

there is Uncle Henry's step on the stairs ! They will make us go to tea presently ; and oh, Herman, I have not seen you yet, nor heard anything about you ! Let me have one look now, to see if you have really got your *well* face back again, before I run up stairs to bathe my eyes.—No, now I cannot. *You* must not look at me. Look at that sweet St. Agnes over my head.—Yes, you do not look as you did in Kansas. I am sure you are well ; but you do not look as you did usually in Boston. You are older,—graver, stronger, grander. Strength is born of suffering ; Herman,—you have suffered, too ?”

His brows knit themselves slightly together at the memories raised by the question ; but they relaxed, and he smiled,—such a smile ! with the very strong essence and elixir of mastered pain in it,—as he said, “ Too much to recall !—enough to give zest to an hour like this !”

“ *What* have you suffered, Herman ?” Constance would have been more or less than woman, had she not felt that her confession demanded one in return.

“ Need I say ? Unhappy love,”—The tears welled up again in her deep, pitying eyes, and he hurried on : “ Slander, insult, numberless hindrances in striving to save the liberties and honor of our country,”——

“ And you allowed yourself, for a moment, to regard things like those ?” cried she. “ But that could have been only because you were lonely,—because I forsook you ! Herman, it is so glorious, so noble, to suffer in a great cause ! Go on ! You cannot, you shall not be overcome ! The blood of the martyrs was the seed of the church ! The heart's blood of patriots is the seed of the common weal ! If the whole country, man by man, were to turn against you now for a time

would no more heed it *now*, [the '*now*' meant, 'with me by your side,'] except for the country's sake!" It was a true girl's speech, more enthusiastic than logical; but, as it rippled through her beautiful lips, she looked at him, as a queen might upon her champion; and conviction flashed on him through the exquisite dark eyes, which, with a kind of kindling tenderness, beamed inspiration on him through their modest lashes. He cast down his own, abashed in his turn before that blaze of tender and regal beauty, and answered, with docility like her own, "I believe that I could not."

Sympathizing Mrs. Ronaldson, who had scarcely waited to superintend the first stage of her infants' immersion, before she returned to keep watch in the hall and guard against any untimely intrusion, was now forced to tap at the door. Her husband wanted to see Constance, and—wanted his tea. She found her niece smiling, composed, and radiant with gentle happiness. All was plainly as it should be. Herman seized her hand with a grasp, which said, in a "natural language" understood all the world over, "Congratulate me." Constance slipped her arm within hers, and whispered, as they crossed the hall together, "Dear, dear, sly Aunt Cora. You thought it would refresh me to walk into the parlour, did you? So you are a match-maker, no better than the other matrons, after all."

Herman spent half the following night in writing to Clara; Constance, in reviewing the events of the day. Herman had done wisely in checking the first out-pourings of her long-pent feelings. He did so, partly because he could never bear to see any woman cry,—that one particularly,—but also because he understood her well enough to suspect that, how-

ever many tears of repentant tenderness she might shed, in the first overwhelming transports of their reunion, she would shed more of mortification and remorse afterwards by herself, if she thought that she had shed one too many before him, or been by a hair's breadth too unreserved and demonstrative. Besides, balm as each word of her passionate contrition was to the wounds which her pride and anger had inflicted upon him, he thought it unfair to take advantage of the emotion into which he had surprised her, to win one from her. He did not consider, that if in a calmer moment she had remembered that he had drawn her on to say too much, her enthusiasm might have reacted, and become aversion. This was true, notwithstanding. He had his reward for his forbearance. In her vigils it came up in review.

“What could he have thought of me?” thought she, “kneeling, and sobbing, and almost throwing myself at his feet, as if to take or cast off at his pleasure! What a tragedy-queen I behaved like! Clara never does so. When can I learn to be calm and rational, and like other people? I hope he will recollect how completely I was taken off my guard. But he does; he did at the time. He said, in those mellow, soothing tones of his, so full of protection and manly tenderness, which are the sweetest in his voice,—of all the tones of all the voices that I ever heard,—just so, ‘I have taken you by surprise! you are tired!’ No, not so! I cannot say it as he did; nobody else could. And he tried to stop me again and again, as well as he could without appearing to see that I was making a fool of myself. He could not enjoy his triumph; because it was my humiliation. How generous!—how mortifying! Well, it was bad enough, to be sure; but it might have been



worse. I kept some things to myself, I thank the saints! I did not say that I could not work, for want of him to hold my worsteds for me to wind, nor sing, because the notes of his voice seemed to be always hovering around mine, and mine was so hollow and meagre without his, nor read, for wondering what he would say of each new book. At least, when I told him about my sitting at that window, I did not mention how I used sometimes to watch by the hour, to see if, by some hopeless chance, I might not see him pass by; and oh, above all, I did *not* say how I used to watch for my chance to snatch at the newspapers unobserved, nor how they would always flutter in my hand while I looked for his name, first among the marriages, and then among the deaths. ‘In Boston, —th instant, Herman Arden, aged 21—22—23. Papers at a distance will please to copy.’ Nor how I would then give a long sigh, and take breath again for the next twelve hours, but say to myself, ‘Very likely he is at the altar or in the hearse at this moment; but it will take another day for the news to come.’

“Horrid, horrid days! horrid dream! It is over now; so much I have to be glad of, and must be; and now, if he is ill, no one can take me away from him. I shall at least be in the same town, and able to hear how he is; and,—if—I am not worthy of him,—he shall teach me to be;—so honorable!—so trustworthy!—so loyal!—so”——very sleepy was Miss Aspenwall, that at this juncture a very heavy slumber prevented her from completing the list of her true-love’s attributes; and she never succeeded in doing so to her satisfaction.

## CHAPTER XV.

## THE LADY'S SHRIFT

(CONCLUDED.)

"That there should be no other *carrière* [than in marriage] possible for the great majority of women, except in the humbler departments of life, is one of those social injustices which call loudest for remedy."

JOHN STUART MILL.

"These views are every day driving distinguished, and gifted, and enthusiastic women, into the pale of that church, which stretches out its arms, and says, 'Come unto me ye who are troubled, ye who are idle, and I will give you rest and work; and, with these, sympathy and reverence, the religious sanction, direction, and control.' Can we find nothing of all this for our women? Why should they thus go out from among us?"

MRS. JAMESON.

CONSTANCE was awakened the next morning by that delicious sensation, which probably comes to most of us twice or thrice in a life-time, of a heart-full of happiness, waiting only for the drowsy memory to rouse itself, walk in, review its treasures, and take possession. The furniture of the luxurious chamber around her told her at once of her escape from hardship and banishment; and then instantly rushed in, the thought of Herman. Claspings her hands with an exclamation of thankfulness, she sprang from her bed, impatient to begin the day.

She looked for her clothes. On a chair beside her, hung the dreary black robe and the cross and rosary. She turned from them with a shudder. Then, with averted eyes, she put out her hand for the cross, pressed it to her lips with reverent and remorseful ten-

derness, and hung it about her neck. "From this, at least, the anchor of my hope," murmured she, "I will never be parted. It shall lie on my heart till I lie in my coffin.—God grant, that that may not be for many, many years! It is so *beautiful* to live!—And if I wear it henceforth, not without, but within, I must also endeavour to bear it on my soul as well as on my body. But that robe, that black uniform of celibacy and orphanage,—the pall of all his happiness and mine when last we met, and met only to part,—how can I ever put it on again! It seems ill-omened! Ah! I could not have been worthy to wear it; or it would not look so grim to me!"

Her soliloquy was interrupted by a tap at the door. Annette, Mrs. Ronaldson's pretty, jaunty quadroon maid, came in, smiling and sparkling with delight characteristic of her race, half at Constance's return, and half at the finery with which her handsome arms were filled to overflowing,—embroidered white petticoats, the freshest and finest sleeves and neckerchiefs of wrought muslin, little dainty caps and coifs, and three of the most youthful and tasteful morning-gowns, from Mrs. Ronaldson's wardrobe. "Mistis, she send me when Mistis go to mass. Mistis she say, 'Annette, you go now, in good season; 'cause, if don't fit, you got to alter 'fore breakfast ready, mind!'"

One of the dresses did fit. Mrs. Ronaldson was tall and well-formed; and it had been made when, having just recovered from an illness, she was slenderer than usual. It happened to be of the very prettiest shade of lavender, the very hue to set off to the best advantage Constance's clear cool tints, her black curls, pink cheeks, and white, polished neck and forehead. "Ky! look more better on young mistis, dan does on

*Mistis* she-sef, now," declared Annette; and so it did. Constance always became her dress, as much as her dress did her. Pretty things looked prettier on her, and plain things pretty; and if she wore a pair of gloves a single evening, and threw them by, one might know them afterwards by the trick of gracefulness which her dainty hands had left in them.

Annette would have dressed her hair; but she had not, just now, much to dress. A border of jetty curls, scarcely longer than Herman's own, as a setting to her fine brow and blue-veined temples, were all that was to be had; and she saw Annette in the glass, over her shoulder, comparing with them her own frizzly tresses with an expression of sly triumph. She sent Annette away. "How provoking!" said she to herself. "What will Herman think? It looks so masculine, and *strong-minded*, and horrid! I could find it in my heart to pull it, to make it grow quicker! And, otherwise, I don't look so badly, for an ex-nun at the venerable age of two-and-twenty," said Constance, as she gave herself a gradual twirl before the Psyche. "How perfectly lovely I look!—my dress, I mean!—How sweet and considerate of Aunt Cora! How I did despise such trappings once, when I had them; but being discontented with them, and contented without, I find are two different things. I should not care for them now, however, if it were not for Herman. Oh, this head! how shall I hide it? I could almost run it into the sand, like an ostrich. I've a great mind to put on my *cornichon* again. No, it would look too absurd with all these embroideries, and make me and everybody remember what I want to forget, and have forgotten. This little muslin Mary Queen-of-Scots, now, with the rose-colored ribbons? The very thing!"

So Herman thought, when he saw her an hour after. She had been captivating enough for him in the sombre costume, which heightened by contrast the charms of her youth and beauty; but it seemed to him, as well as to her, like a ghostly barrier between them, and he was delightfully surprised to have it banished, and told her so, as they seated themselves again in the little parlour, to chat away the morning at their leisure.

"Borrowed plumes," answered she. "This dress is Aunt Cora's; but she has gone out to *shop* for me now. She makes everything easy and pleasant to me. When I entered upon my noviciate, I gave her my jewels; and she now insists upon giving back to me,—not them; for I do not want them; and it would not suit my present circumstances, nor feelings either, exactly, to wear them,—but a large equivalent in ready money. I gave everything else to the church, Herman. I have nothing left for you but myself."

"Nothing but an infinite treasure? That will satisfy me tolerably for the present. I have between two and three thousand dollars a year, very much at your service; and if you need more, I flatter myself that I shall be able to earn it. It does not cost me much to *keep* myself."

"I have learned, too, not a little to my surprise, how little I can live upon. A good lesson, is it not?—not the only one, I hope, which I have learned in my new grave school; but I have not explained to you yet how I came to enter into it. I told you that I saw the two sisters go by?"

"Yes."

"I did not know them then. Afterwards I did. One was Sister Mary Peter, your nurse; you understand her pretty thoroughly, I fancy,—a good, useful



woman, though quaint and odd. The other was the very *beau idéal* of a saint, Sister Corona Bartholomew of Consolation. Wonderful as the beauty of her form and face were at her age, they were nothing to that of her character and life. She always reminded me of those lines of Scott, which you read to Clara and me once,—don't you remember? we were sitting in the library:—

‘Where, darling of each heart and eye,  
From all the youth of Sicily,  
St. Rosalie retired to God.’

She was young, rich, beautiful, and beloved; and her first sorrow, she told me, was parting from her family; but, from the earliest times that she could recollect, she used to steal away from her companions to kneel and pray, and loved God best, and wished to give herself wholly to Him. Her parents almost worshipped her; but they were devout persons, too, and required of her only, that she should wait until she was strong enough for her duties, and old enough to know her own mind. She entered upon her noviciate at twenty-one; and they gave her up with blessings and thanksgivings, that she had been able to make so safe and happy a choice, in the midst of all their grief at the separation.

“The evening of the day that I saw them, Bishop Devereux called. Oh, you must know him, Herman! I had seen him repeatedly before; but I was hardly acquainted with him till then. Little Jenny happened to prattle something about the beauty of one of her schoolmates. She wished she was as handsome. The Bishop is always kind to children. He took her up, gave her a ride on his knee, asked her why she wished so, and told her that, if she wished for a beautiful spirit, that was very well worth having; because she

could keep it forever, and ten thousand years hence it would still be beautiful; but, if she wanted only a beautiful face, he thought she might do as well without it; for it seldom lasted long, and was often gone almost before one knew one had it, and it might leave her unhappy at the loss of it. He did not look towards me, or make the slightest application of what he said to me. He was too well-bred for that; though he is one of the most sincere and penetrating persons I ever saw, and can tell you home-truths enough, if you ask him for them. But his words seemed to wake an echo in me; and, before I knew it, out came some simple little speech in confirmation of them. 'Yes, indeed!' I believe, was all I said. He smiled good-humoredly,—as if he was half-pleased, half-surprised, at my earnestness,—and mused a few minutes.

"Mammy came and took Jenny, to put her to bed; and then he drew his chair up beside mine, and devoted himself to my entertainment for an hour, showing himself not like a priest then, but like a high-minded gentleman, scholar, philosopher, and man of the world in the best sense of the term,—that of a man who knows the world, not by being led blindfold by it, but by seeing through it. He is a man of both worlds, in short.—Though he never forgot the gentleness and courtesy due from man to woman, he gave out his mind as freely in talking with me, as if he had been conversing with an equal in intellect and information; and that, Herman, is, I think, the rarest compliment which your sex ever pays to mine. [A compliment too, Miss Constance, which, as the bishop was shrewd enough to know, an intellectual girl seldom fails to appreciate.] But he did not tire me out, as some men who consider themselves 'gifted in conversation' would,

by hurling huge theories at my head one after another, as fast as I could parry them, or haranguing solemnly and endlessly on one subject in a drawing-room, as if he was in a lecture-room; nor did he keep the floor to himself. On the contrary, he took care, I could see, to make me bear my full part. He listened respectfully and apparently with interest to me, and then would either clinch my ideas with one pithy, pointed sentence of his own, or attack them playfully, and make me defend them before he would yield. In this manner we ran, sometimes a-tilt, sometimes abreast, through a long course of literature, sculpture, painting, and music; while I did not know which to admire most, his wit, eloquence, information, breeding, or benevolence. At last we came upon architecture, where he had to have the field to himself; for I knew nothing of it; but he begged leave to bring some fine photographs, which he had, of foreign cathedrals, for me to look over, and gave me a description of St. Peter's, and the Miserere in the Sistine Chapel, which was a perfect poem. I dreamed of them all night!

“That evening had been an oasis in the dry desert of my life. When it was over, I was surprised to find how cheered and interested I had been,—carried out of myself, or rather into something like my old self. I remember, when I awoke the next morning, dull again, and hopeless as usual, I said to myself, Now I know exactly how those old saints at Jerusalem, who ‘came out of their graves and appeared unto many,’ must have felt, if they were put back into them. The bishop repeated his visit, however, the very next week, and brought his magnificent photographs; and Aunt Cora and I drew him on, by our interest and attention, to give us quite a charming lecture upon them, full of

antiquarian lore, and of that enthusiastic kind of reverence of which he is so full.

“After that he was here a good deal. He had been Aunt Cora’s director ever since she was twelve years old, and was therefore quite intimate in her household. Either she, or his own penetration, must have given him a hint that all was not quite at peace within me; and he was as kind and attentive to me as a father to a suffering daughter.

“At last, she gave Jenny a children’s party, and invited three or four of the grown-up sisters of the smallest children, to accompany and take care of them. Jenny wanted a fortune-teller; and Aunt Cora gave Annette five dollars, to get herself up a costume like that of the Sybil in the drawing-room. You have no idea how well she did it, nor how picturesque she looked. We gave her a little mother-of-pearl and gilt casket, with two compartments in it, one containing little scrolls of colored paper with fortunes written on the inside for the boys, and the other, similar ones for the girls. As she could not read, we told her to pretend that she could not speak, and merely to give out the papers in silence, as the children marched, two and two, before her for them; and she did it, very deftly and prettily. Aunt Cora hid her in the recess of a window, with the purple curtains let down straight before her to the floor; and through them, I suppose, she availed herself of the privilege of peeping, till the clock struck eight; when she parted them, and stood revealed, gorgeous and mysterious, creating an immense sensation.

“Aunt Cora hoped that I would write the fortunes;—a couplet of amusing doggerel for each would have been enough;—but I put it off for two or three days, forgot

it, and did not think of it again till Annette came with her empty casket, at five o'clock on the fated afternoon; when I had a headache and was just going to dress. I sat down for an hour, and scribbled off twenty or thirty as fast as I could; but then I had to go to my *toilette*, and left poor aunty in the lurch, to find the rest where she might. She was disappointed; for she expected, at the least, forty little guests; and what half of them had, the other half would be sure to want; but she took it kindly, thanked me, and said that perhaps, as a last resort, Uncle Henry would write some. So I left the business on her hands, and thought no more about it. When the time came, however, the supply of little orange, purple, scarlet, and green papers, seemed inexhaustible; and some of them, I found when the children brought them to me to read, had verses in them prettier than mine, or, I thought, than any Uncle Henry could write, and in a hand I did not know.

“When all the children knew their doom, Annette *salaamed* to Aunt Cora, and withdrew, after giving her the casket. It was not even yet empty. In the bottom there were several envelopes of gold and silver paper; and she gave them to us, older girls. Mine had within it these lines, written in that unknown hand: [Constance's memory was a perfect library. She could usually repeat any passage that struck her particularly, either in poetry or prose, after reading it twice or thrice.]

‘Maiden fair and proud,  
Thou, amidst the crowd,  
Movest like a thing apart,  
With a pure, but cold, cold, heart!  
Like yon clear cold river,  
By whose side the aspens shiver,  
And the elms their drooping green  
Hold aloft, its front to screen



From the hot intrusive sun;  
 And wild roses, one by one,  
 Peep with timid, blushing, grace,  
 In its cool impassive face,  
 While it goes unlingering by,  
 Lonely in its majesty,  
 Thankless, self-involved, sedate,  
 In its flat and shallow state.

‘Maiden, wouldst thou know  
 Where that river’s flow  
 Grows most high and deep?—  
 Where it, from the steep  
 Of its rocky pride, doth stoop  
 To wet the lips of flowers that droop  
 In the lowly vale beneath!  
 There opal clouds its beauty wreath  
 The heavens, that see it, straight fling down  
 Their striped rainbows, for its crown;  
 And its abasement speaks in thunder,  
 With such a voice, that all men wonder  
 And the rooted earth doth shake,  
 And an answering murmur make.

‘Wouldst thou be so high?  
 Bow in charity  
 To the humblest near thee,—  
 Those who need, yet fear thee!  
 Then shall clouds, if they surround,  
 But adorn, with rainbows crowned,  
 Thy heaven-watched, plenteous, bounteous lie;  
 The world, amid its selfish strife,  
 Around thy path shall feel a thrill  
 Of wonder, murmur, and be still;  
 While with a grand unearthly voice  
 Thy long-mute being bids rejoice  
 The heavenly Shepherd’s panting flocks,  
 That bleat along the thirsty rocks,  
 And, even in thy saddest hours,  
 Thy tears revive God’s drooping flowers.’

“I had time only to glance at the first words then ;  
 for I was wanted to play *Magical-Music* on the piano  
 for the children. When they were gone, I stood under

a chandelier, and read the whole, once, twice, thrice. It surprised and puzzled me, and gave me a glimpse of myself, such as I had never had before. I had no objection to being told, that I was proud. (I think we are many of us more vain of our faults than of our virtues, Herman! Just as the courtiers overlooked Prince Nosey's pretty other features, and said to him, 'It is a most princely and becoming thing to have so huge a nose!'—Satan says to us, 'It is a most becoming thing, and a proof of a peculiarly noble nature, to have so fastidious a sensitiveness, reserve so invincible, haughtiness so unapproachable, and so sovereign a contempt for all those less favored by birth, fortune, and education, than ourselves! In short, arrogance, hastiness of temper, and *exclusiveness*, are the indisputable patent of inherent nobility!' and, as with his royal highness, so it is with us; until we acknowledge our blemishes to be blemishes, we cannot be freed from them; and that is the reason, I suppose, why so many of us carry them with us into the other world, and, when it is too late,—when our fleshly disguises are stripped off,—behold ourselves, and are beheld by others, ugly fiends.) However, there was a rather different view from mine taken here of my pet peccadillo. 'Cold! self-involved! thankless!' If those little adjectives were intended for me, I thought them specimens of pretty plain speaking; and it was not every one, from whom I was disposed to take them in good part. Then, careless and hurried as the versification was, there was a suggestion in the last stanza, which startled me like a hidden door suddenly opened before me, through the blank stone wall of my future, showing me a long solemn vista lighted from above; and at its end lay paradise.

"While I read, and wondered, and pondered, the

bishop, who had been present in his most genial mood all the evening, merry-making and making merry, like a playful shepherd among the little lambs of his flock, spoke at my elbow : ‘ The answer of the oracle ? Can not you make it out ? ’

“ ‘ Its words, but not its meaning, nor its author. Can you help me, sir ? ’ said I.

“ He took it from me, and slowly read it to himself. ‘ So this came to you ! ’ he said at length. ‘ A coincidence ! as you enlightened Protestants would say. What a superstitious old Catholic like me, would rather call a providence ! ’

“ ‘ You have seen it before ? ’

“ ‘ Certainly ; I wrote it,’ he replied, with the utmost frankness. ‘ I came in at twilight, to make arrangements for the magic lantern as I promised Mrs. Ronaldson, and found her in perplexity about the fortunes,’—

“ ‘ Which I promised to furnish, and forgot ; ’——

“ He bowed, and went on, ‘ That fact she did not think it necessary to mention. I accept your candid confession as your penance, and absolve you.—I wrote the required number, and this among them.’——

“ ‘ And thought of me ? ’

“ ‘ I have often thought of you lately, and with much solicitude and sympathy. You do not complain ; but it is the duty of the physician of the soul, as well as the physician of the body, to learn to interpret the dumb signs of speechless suffering. My skill has seldom been so baffled as in the study of your case. It cannot be a common one ; for you are not a common woman. Without some aid from you, I shall never, I begin to fear, understand it. Of thus much I am certain : girl as you are, you are passing, alone and in silence, through grief and despair which might drive a strong

man mad ; and I am also sure that, if you would allow me, I could relieve and save you ; because the holy church has balm for every wound. However, if I had known that these verses were to fall to your share, I might certainly have toned them down to advantage. *Flat and shallow!* your stateliness is anything but that ; I must have been thinking of the river, rather than of you, when I wrote it. I had no right to say anything of the sort to you. I was hurried, and had just come from the confessional, and forgotten to lay aside the trick of plain speaking ; and,—in short, you will forget the unlucky scrawl, will you not, and forgive an old friend for an unintentional, acknowledged, and deplored offence ?' said he, with touching humility, twisting the paper to a match in his hand, and holding it up towards a candle.

" 'No,' cried I, springing forward to intercept it, 'I cannot find it in my heart, to waste things so precious as forgiveness and forgetfulness. I will neither pardon an imaginary offence, nor forget a prophecy so far above my hopes or deserts. Right?—you have a right to say anything to me that I need to hear ; or, if you have not, I will give you one ! Speak plainly to me ; I can bear it. Faulty I may be,—must be,—but not weak, or, at least, not altogether weak ; for, as you have seen or I would not have told you, I know how to suffer, and to suffer in silence. Flatterers are many ; friends are few. Probe my heart, if you will, but gently, for its wounds have rankled long ; and satisfy yourself that they are incurable. I will endeavour to welcome the pain, for the sake of the charity which prompts you to inflict it.'

"He paused and considered. Then he said, 'When can I see you ? It is too late to begin anything to-night.'

“‘Name your own time.—All times are alike to me now.’

“‘Poor child!—No, I will not. To know when I was coming, would only make you nervous. Let me call when I can. I shall be particularly busy all this week; but perhaps in the course of the next, or the week after, I may find you disengaged. If you are not, you can send me away again. You are not at all subject to sudden illness?’

“‘Not at all.’

“‘If you *should* be ill, or meet with any dangerous accident, you would not fail to send for me instantly?’

“‘There is no one on whose sympathy and support I should more confidently rely.’

“‘Nor any one to whose rescue I should hasten so anxiously. Send after me, wherever I am. I shall leave word at my house, whenever I leave it, where I am going, until I have seen you again.’

“He was so very kind and solicitous about me, that he found time after all, to call the very next morning. Not expecting him, I was sitting here alone, in doleful consultation with a dictionary and a grammar, trying listlessly to puzzle out a page or two of ‘*Cicero de Senectute*.’ I learned a little Latin at school; and I had taken it up again, since my conversations with him had stimulated my mind, with a vague idea that it was a good thing to do, and a dignified way of getting rid of my time. At first our interview was rather awkward. He waited for me; and I, for him. He looked at my book. ‘Latin?’ said he; ‘Do you like it?’

“‘Frankly, no. Less than any other language that I ever studied. There is so rigid, petrified, and crystallized a regularity in the forms and terminations,



and such utter seeming confusion in the arrangement of the words! It is so dreadfully unlike English, that it makes me feel both home-sick and spell-bound. It often reminds me of a frightful dream, by which I was once tormented when a school-girl. They tried to teach me geometry; and I believe I fairly fell sick of it. At all events, fall sick I did, from whatever cause; and, as often as I could lose myself in a feverish slumber, I *found* myself in a wilderness of mere huge, hard, gray granite prisms, cubes, and-so-forth,—every block, that I looked at successively, having more and blunter angles, and huger and blanker sides than its neighbours—piled up to the sky, around to the horizon, and down to the centre. At last, when I had fully possessed myself of their grim individuality, and they themselves of mine,—for they all seemed to watch and crouch for me like so many blind but sentient Sphinxes,—they began to stir and tumble grittily down over one another, and finally over me; when the hard, blank, horror reached its climax, and I awoke screaming.’

“He smiled. ‘The study can hardly be any great pleasure to you, then,’ said he. ‘Why do you pursue it?’

“‘I hardly know. Why do others?’

“‘A few men and women from love of it. Many men from ambition.’

“‘And no women from ambition?’

“‘A woman of creative genius, here and there, may perhaps, to strengthen and expand her brains;—as an athlete fights with a shadow, to strengthen and expand his muscles;—as a means, not as an end.’

“‘But why should not other women, too, as well as the many men, who, as you say, become learned from

ambition? I do not think I quite understand. Surely not all of them who do so, are creative geniuses.'

"'By no means, my daughter. [How patiently and pityingly the word came out! I had been an orphan so long!] But they can be physicians, lawyers, and dignitaries in Church and State; and, in all their several walks of life, they find full employment and demand for highly-cultivated minds. Diplomas are showered upon them, professorships conferred upon them, and flatteries interchanged with them by other scholars all the world over. Are you ambitious?'

"'I hardly know. Not very, I believe, naturally, or, at least, not for myself. If I sometimes strive to become so now, ambition itself is to me a means rather than an end. If I am ambitious, it is to obtain the power of exorcism.'

"'In your turn, you puzzle me.'

"'I am haunted, father!'

"'My child, by what?'

"'By a thought!' I said; and I closed my eyes involuntarily, to shut it out. Oh, Herman! I never could repeat all this to you, if I did not grudge it to any man, the holiest and the best, that he should know anything of me that was kept back from you, my betrothed!'

"'My own sweet Constance! Why should you shrink from making me believe, if you can, that you cared for me one thousandth part as much as I did for you?'

Constance smiled faintly, glanced timidly into his face, looked down again, and went on: "Then the Bishop said, very gently and compassionately, 'Cannot you explain yourself a little further, my daughter?—Take courage, and endeavour to think aloud.—Forget

that any ear is present to hear you, except His whose mouth-piece I am.—Remember, that a painful malady is always less terrible to the physician than to the patient.—You know, that I may almost be said to have a hereditary right to your confidence.—Perhaps you will allow me to offer a conjecture as to the nature of your suffering ?

“I bowed. He opened the ‘Golden Legend,’ which lay before us on the table, and turned, and pointed, to the lines,

‘Love, that in every woman’s heart  
Will have the whole, and not a part ;  
And is to her, in Nature’s plan,  
More than ambition is to man,’—

“I started. He looked at me. The trap had sprung. There was no escape. Covering my face with my hands, I cried, ‘My lover proved unworthy ; [I really thought so then, Herman ; there is nothing that we cannot believe, if we do but assert it often enough ;] and I discarded him, at once and forever. One can be very strong for an hour. He returns no more. His memory *does*, and is driven away only to return,—in solitude, in society, in hours that should be gay, and in hours that should be holy. Who can be strong at all times, and forever ? I struggle. My life shall give way before my resolution does ; but I sometimes think that both may, before my grief. Press me no further, kind father ; but, if you have the skill, teach me the way to cast this demon out. Could not ambition do it, think you ?’

“He hesitated. ‘Tell me what you really think,’ I urged ; ‘surely my openness deserves frankness in return.’

“His answer was to the point, as usual. (It is one

great charm of his conversation, that he always takes up a subject just where you leave it ; instead of merely waiting for you to pause, and then,—as so many people do,—going on to make a speech of his own, perfectly disconnected with what you have said, as if he was playing *crambo*.) ‘ You shall have it, my daughter,’ said he, ‘ since you ask for it. As a man of honor, I cannot deny that successful ambition may often stupify misery like yours ; though, like other opiates and anodynes, it is apt in the end to leave behind a worse disorder in the place of that which it alleviates. But the world has three prizes only, that I recollect, to offer to the ambition of women ; and the triumph of learning is not one of them. Study as hard as you can, for the sake of that, and you will succeed only in becoming a woman among scholars, and a scholar amongst women. You will find no companionship in your own sex, nor admiration in the other. Crowd your fine and subtle, but small and sensitive, brain as full as it will bear, with Greek and Hebrew roots and crabbed Latin authors. Hundreds of thick-skulled Germans, Englishmen, and even New-Englanders, will bear away the palm from you. Your head will no more hold as much as theirs, than your stomach would. You might as well challenge a prize-fighter to eat forty pounds of beef with you upon a wager. You are like a swan running a race with an ostrich. The creature is out of its element. Men will ridicule and despise your vain attempt to outdo them on their own ground, and join with women in setting down to the account of your unfeminine accomplishments all the shortcomings in feminine duties in which they can detect you, or of which they can suspect you.’ ”

“ The Bishop was severe,” said Herman.

"But right, was he not?"

"Half. Right enough, I dare say, in thinking that Nature had been unkind enough to incapacitate most women from outstripping, in their greedy race, mere gluttonous ostriches of envious and selfish pedantry. But I interrupted you."——

"The Bishop went on: 'Let Cicero alone, then; or read him in English, if you don't like Latin. No. The real prizes which the world offers to the ambition of a woman and a lady are three: first, what it calls a great match; secondly, eminence as a writer; and, thirdly, success in sculpture, painting, or the composition of music, which arts we will throw into one department, and consider them together under one head; as, among them all, they may furnish one ever-green laurel wreath, for one woman, in one century. Can you think of any others?'

"'I have sometimes thought that, if I were a poor girl, and if actors and actresses were a more refined set of people than they are said to be, I could find a career, excitement, and oblivion, among them.'

"He looked at me with astonishment, and something more like sternness than I had ever seen in his face before, and rejoined, 'But now?—they being what they are said to be, and you, a lady?'——

"'I cannot go upon the stage.'

"His brows unbent; and he replied, 'Right! If I were indeed your spiritual father, and we were considering your eternal instead of your temporal welfare, I should be obliged to tell you that you could take no more probable way than that, to purchase a little temporary ease or delirium at the expense of everlasting torments and horrors! But, one thing at a time. I am to talk to you, just now, as a man of the world to a



woman of the world. My three alternatives remain. Let us consider your chances as a candidate for each. Marriage: women like you,—supposing that there are enough women like you to constitute a class,—do not, unless my penetration is at fault, love twice, nor marry without love?" He waited for an answer.

"Your penetration is not at fault. O father, in pity let us speak no more of that!"

"Forgive me! no; I will not touch your poor heart again, until you give me leave to heal it; and if I have done so hitherto, it was not from heedlessness, but from necessity. My child, it was needful that the wound should be thoroughly searched, before it could be dressed; but that has now been done. For the present, let it alone. There, remain then, open to you, literature and art, if you are a woman of genius; if not, of course, failure will be your only attainment in either. Now, what is vulgarly called *talent*, I know that you have to a high degree; but genius is so rare, that the presumption is always strongly against its being possessed by any one, either man or woman, until its possession has been proved. Perhaps you have it, notwithstanding. Let us see. Let me ask you a question or two. For which do you feel within yourself the greatest aptitude,—literature or art?"

"Of the two, I think, for literature. I can copy, with my pencil anything that I see; but I cannot design. I can read any music, and even play *fantasie* when I am in the mood; but I fear that they owe all the merit, which they have, to their being executed with the expression of the momentary feeling which prompts them. I cannot write them down; because I know nothing of the rules of music; and I am sure, that what little inspiration I have, would die under the drudgery of learning and conforming to them. On

the other hand, I write prose and verse with ease, and sometimes with pleasure.'

"In literature you will probably succeed, then, if in either. Your destiny, perhaps, often faces you when you awake in the morning, or arouses you in the night, or confronts you in the bustle of the day, with a dim plan in her hand,—a sketch of a romance, a poem, or a play.—She will give you only fitful glimpses of it, probably. She half unrolls it; then she folds it up. She lets you see sometimes the beginning only,—sometimes the middle,—sometimes the two ends. She is very seldom indulgent enough to reveal to you the whole, at once. If she ever does so, it is, most likely, for an instant only, and with a malignant purpose to overload and overwhelm you with more details than your memory can hold. She says, however, This plan, which I hold in my hand, half hid even from your eyes, you are doomed to carry out before the eyes of mankind. The memory of its unearthly beauty shall haunt and fever you;\* its grandeur shall oppress you; its very difficulty shall defy and taunt you, until your work is done. From what I have already shown you, guess the rest. The rest is there,—somewhere,—and traceable in full harmonious proportions from the portion you have seen. Dispatch! For you there is to be no cheerful, calm companionship, no refreshing sleep, no relished food, until the task lies behind you, that now lies before. You may fly; but I shall follow. You may pine; I shall not pity. You may fall sick; but I shall lie in wait for your recovery, and put your pen, before your needle, into your trembling hand.

"She speaks; and you obey, impatient to have the

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\* "The memory of a beautiful denied you shall strain your powers."  
E. B. BROWNING.

doom behind you instead of before. You go apart fearfully, shut your door, and give yourself up to the mysterious prompting, like a Pythia forced to the tripod. You are no longer a woman, but a *writing-medium*,—a soothsayer,—a seer. Ideal creatures swarm in the air about you. You throw yourself into them; they, themselves into you. You speak their words, do their deeds, feel their feelings, shriek their pangs. The thoughts thicken. They dazzle,—they blind you. Your brain reels with them. Bewildered, you turn this way and that until you are dizzy, to catch them before they escape you; as a child does to catch all the snow-flakes in a hurrying storm. Your heart beats hard; your breath pants fast. Still you hurry on; because you cannot stop,—because the preternatural dictation does not.—Time hurries on with you. Your clock strikes the hours as fast as it usually ticks the minutes,—hours which do on you the work of years,—such hours as stamp wrinkles on the brow, and on the brain.

“‘At length a sudden stop surprises you. Coming to yourself, you look about you, and perceive that your task is finished. That is, at least, a relief. You languidly take it up, turn it over, and read it, at first with curiosity, then with admiration, and then with amazement. It is something new under the sun. It does not seem to you to be yours. It is not, properly speaking, though it makes you famous. It is the work of the demon whose servant you are. It is strong; but you are weak,—weaker even than ever before. He has taken much of your life to put into it. A few more such achievements, and all will be spent; and you will go to him for the arrears of your wages.

“‘Have you ever felt anything like this?’ said the Bishop. I never had.”

“Thank God!” cried Herman.

"Are you glad? Then I am, too, now; though I was rather sorry at that time, to tell the truth."

"Indeed I am! Self-forgetfulness is one thing,—and one of the noblest things, too, under the sun;—self-abandonment, quite another. Nobody can love a generous ardor and enthusiasm more than I do; but I distrust and detest unnatural excitement of all kinds. Why should it be more right or reputable, wilfully to inflame and finally to destroy one's God-given brain with undue solitude, fasting, or labor, than with opium, in order to write, carve, or paint, better than one's neighbours?—for that, I take it, is what the cant about sacrificing one's self to art commonly means, in plain English."

"The bishop was glad, too," said Constance. "'But that,' said he, 'is female genius. It is the forbidden fruit, which is now and then offered to Eve's daughters by the Serpent, as it was to her. Like her, they do not thrive upon it. It first intoxicates, then kills them.'"

"'But surely,' I exclaimed, 'not all women of genius answer this description!'"

"'To be sure,' said he, 'now I think of it, there are exceptions, some of whom you may have met with, but whom I did not consider it necessary to mention, because I could not believe that your place could be found among them,—female geniuses, if you will, but females not of feminine but of masculine genius. I have myself chanced here and there to encounter some nondescript, calling herself a woman, who, without any goading inward gad-fly or exhausting fire in her veins, besieged eminence scientifically, month after month and year after year, and conquered it at last, by regular approaches, like a man. She has no heart to unset-

tle her aim by its perturbations; and her iron nerves and India-rubber spirits are incapable of weariness and discouragement. She eats, drinks, sleeps, laughs, and talks, but deliberately succeeds notwithstanding. She regularly and readily takes her seat on the tripod every day, for a certain number of hours; she suffers only when she is kept away; and even then she endures it stoically. If Apollo will not come down, she cheerfully makes him a curtsy at the end of the time, and goes away, watching all the time, however, with the stanch, calm, cold-blooded, persistent instinct of a cat that sits beside a mouse-hole,—while she seems intent only upon her needle-work or housekeeping,—to pull him down upon her head, if he lets drop within her reach so much as the hem of his garment, or one golden hair. The next day, she is at her post again, and the next; until she fairly tires him down, and he does her bidding to be rid of her.

“‘She is an open-eyed, clear-sighted looker-on in life; and what others secretly feel, she openly expresses. Men have hitherto had the pen to themselves almost as exclusively as the sword. The thoughts and feelings of distinctive manhood have become commonplace by long repetition. Women, with a few exceptions, have but lately begun to write with energy, simplicity, and the artistic skill which comes of liberal culture; and, even now, there is not more than one woman in ten thousand capable of writing, with force and fire, what distinctive womanhood has been thinking and feeling from the beginning of time. Hence, such a person as I have in my mind finds fresh themes in plenty ready to her firm, bold, and masterly hand. She handles them accordingly, and has her reward; but her very reward would be intolerable to you.



“‘Men will not believe, that a woman’s ink can glow so with anything but her own heart’s blood. They analyze it, in order to find out what sort of stuff her heart is made of, and confidently pronounce it the gall of bitterness. They cannot attribute to her the possession of a head for any practical purpose. The utterance of her divination, laying bare the souls of others, will always be taken for a revelation of her own. Her cold heart is sure to get the credit of all the fire of her pages. People insist on pitying her for sorrows, which she is incapable of feeling. She takes their sympathy coolly, silently, and graciously, as a tribute to her power, which is all that this mere mind clad with womanhood cares about. She smiles in her sleeve, and keeps her own counsels. Could you do so? Could you bear to have it supposed, how falsely soever, by every chance reader in the booksellers’ shops, that you had laid your autobiography, with the leaves cut, invitingly in his way? Could you bear to have it asserted, that you had sold the sacred privacy of your shrinking, shuddering soul for fame?’”

“Is it permitted to me to say a word or two to the bishop, in behalf of this poor representative woman of his,” asked Herman, “if I will do so very respectfully?”

“Certainly; I should like to hear what you would say; and so would he, if he were here; but oh, Herman, Herman, you are not going to answer respectfully! There is the very sauciest possible twinkle in your eyes at this moment; and there is no use in your trying to draw your lips in to hide under your *moustache!*” And both of them, looking in each other’s faces, went back to boyhood and girlhood and laughed heartily together for sheer happiness and affection. “Your very ringing

old laugh!" continued Constance. "How like the dear old days it sounds! How unfortunately unromantic I used to think it! How glad it makes me now, to hear it so full of health and happiness! You must have kept it put away for me all these years. If you had brought it out oftener, it would have changed and grown older and less mirthful with yourself."

"Yes; there must be some 'secret sympathy' between us. I could not often laugh while you were sighing."

"But you must not laugh now, either, at the first friend, who was able to give me any comfort, after I drove you away; or I shall sigh again."

"Don't; or I shall never even smile again; but neither shall I laugh or sneer at that poor, patient female genius of his. The picture is drawn from life, evidently; but not, I think, quite *to* the life. Some of the outlines, however, are so true, that from them we can, I hope, correct the others. I should like to know that woman, Constance; though perhaps, as the *Anonymi* in the newspapers say, when they mean to be especially withering, 'I should not want such a woman as that for my wife,' even supposing,—as they always forget to add,—I could have her if I did; and though I can even conceive it to be possible that, being wedded to Apollo, she might not care to marry me. Helpmeets don't grow on every bush, nor even on every estimable and admirable bush. I never in my life saw but one woman whom I did wish to marry; [Constance's blush was as soft and bright as sunshine strained through a crimson curtain upon polished ivory; her long curled eye-lashes lay basking upon it; and she looked most demurely nun-like, most supremely happy;] but I have seen many whom I liked

esteemed, and wished well, very heartily ; and I fancy that this lady of masculine genius might be of the number.—It seems to me, that it is somewhat arrogant in us mighty men to claim as masculine, not feminine, everything that is vigorous, true, artistic, and, in short, worth claiming.—If she has a lyre, she probably got it where we got ours,—those of us who are lucky enough to have any,—from the gods, such as they chose to give her. She has as much right to charge ours with being effeminate when they sound sweet, as we hers with being masculine when it sounds strong. If she thunders, we need not accuse her of having stolen our thunder. I, for one, will dispute her possession neither of a head nor a heart, even if she chooses to keep the latter to herself and Apollo ; nay, I think that she must have one, and a great one, though calm, and

‘At leisure from itself,  
To soothe and sympathize;’

else how should she be let into the secret of those shrinking sorrows and struggles of her own sex, which she rises above in her individual life, yet makes her own in order to bespeak for others the sympathy and compassion which for herself she does not need,—strifes and sorrows which she describes so vividly and so eloquently, that they seem, to those too selfish to understand her self-forgetfulness, to be her own,—while the real sufferers remain sheltered and unexposed. She shows her real *retenue* and freedom from egotism by never caring to come forward *in propria personâ* to explain herself. She minds her own business ; and if other people will not mind theirs, I would rather that she should laugh than cry.

“Because, though a woman, she is human, and am-

bition belongs to,—not manly merely,—but essential human nature, she is ambitious. Her sisters, not daring to be ‘strong-minded’ enough to look higher, are ambitious of fine houses, clothes, and equipages; she of fine poems, plays, or romances. Their triumphs are over the rest of her sex; hers, *for* the rest of her sex. A few more women like her, in the study and the *studio*, and the world will find out and acknowledge, that there is a kind of power and heavenly fire that is feminine or confined to neither sex, and that women, without being in the slightest degree unwomanly, may and do have noble brains, and put them to noble uses. I like her better far than her predecessor in review, the ‘writing medium,’ because, in being an author, she does not forget to be a woman. If her only hope was set on literary success, she could hardly bear so cheerfully to be so often balked in her efforts. If she can lay her ineffectual pen and paper aside, so good-humoredly, when her vacant time expires, it must be, I am pretty sure, to go away and perform the good offices of a good daughter, sister, friend, or neighbour. Thus she can say, If this hope is lost, all is not lost. She must have a brave and great heart to bear such disappointments so courageously, and never sicken with hope deferred. In order to do so, it would seem as if it should be a good heart, too, and lean on God; though being in partnership with a strong head, early and duly stocked with ecclesiastical history, perhaps it is a sealed, and appears a heretical, heart to the bishop and his church. I ask your pardon. Am I getting on forbidden ground?”

“Oh, no, I am not bigoted; and I fear he may be a little so. Go on. I like to hear about her. If there is such a woman, I wish I could know her.”

“I wish you could; for, without friendship, she might be lonely in the midst of her struggles and her triumphs. She is most probably unmarried; for if she had a husband and children, they would interfere with those regular *tête-à-têtes* with Apollo. A woman must usually choose between art and wedlock. Either is enough to engross her, to the exclusion of the other. She has chosen art, and is more than content when it smiles upon her, and uncomplaining when it frowns.

“I find no coldness, but rather a fine ardor, in her calm, grand perseverance. I don't quite believe in that absence of inward prompting in her case. If the divine gadfly of inspiration stings her, she probably will not think it worth mentioning, but will say, with Mr. Toots, ‘Oh, it's of no consequence, thank you!’ She is strong enough to bear it by herself, with the help of the wholesome food, sleep, and recreation, which she has sense enough to take. She wants her readers to think about, not her, but the heroes and heroines whom she talks to them about. She does not mean to have them prying into that heart of hers, at which she looks herself just often enough to set it right towards God and her neighbour, and no oftener. She is not *introspective*. She sees many things without her in the world, in heaven, and in hell, which she thinks much better worth her attention and ours, than anything within her. I like her better than her predecessor; because, while self-forgetful, she is still self-governed. I think I should even like her books better than those of that possessed victim of glory. They might,—they would,—be less demoniac, less maddened and maddening, but they would be truer, juster, sunnier; one would be not unlikely to find in them here and there, amidst all their imperfections, reflected glimpses of the



greatest of all minds, the mind of God. If any of those books fell in my way, I would take them thankfully, and use them just as she desired, as spy-glasses to look through at life, and help me to see it more clearly; I would not invert them, and use them to peer back impertinently at her with, through the wrong end. If I could, I would write reviews of them, such as should do good to that good heart of hers,—as free from paltry flattery as she from vanity, and letting her individuality as utterly alone as she does,—bestowing upon them honest praise and no less honest criticism, such as should show her how for the future to polish away all of the blemishes, of which she would gladly be told, for the sake of getting rid of them.”

“Oh, Herman,” cried Constance, “let me thank you for her!—Herman—*Hermano*—you deserve your name! A brother to all man and womankind! How much better than a brother to me!”—

“Yes; you thank me, and from your heart. You have been taught to disbelieve your own possession of genius; and yet you receive a tribute to its possession and worthy exercise by any of your sisters, as a tribute to you. Thus generous, noble, women think and feel! Nor do they think and feel so of genius only, but of learning also. It is true, as the bishop said, that scholarship in women is not rewarded so abundantly as in men, by academical distinctions and *Mutual-Admiration Societies*. I am afraid it may be also true, that there is a very wide and very narrow prejudice against it; because good sense and good feeling are apt to be in the minority, on any question newly presented to this prejudiced old world. But all those persons, whose opinion is really worth regarding, like a woman none the less for being liberally educated, provided she is

none the less conscientious, useful, gentle, and genial; and such of your own sex, particularly, as you would choose for companions and friends, sweet friend, have quite a remarkable habit of glorying and delighting in the acquirements and achievements of other worthy specimens of womankind, as if they were their own. It is as much as a man's life is worth, among the former, to detract from the latter."

"I may study or write, then, sometimes, if I will choose you for my director?"

"On one or two conditions."

"What are they?"

"You are not to become a *writing-medium*, nor to drown your bloom and spirits in printer's ink; and your learned labors are to be pursued at my elbow, so that I may have the honor of lending my aid to smooth away any possible difficulties, before they have time to chronicle themselves in wrinkles."

"No, I will never be an author or a scholar. The conditions are too hard; and so is the work."

"What! Not ambitious, after all?"

"What! Do not you propose to allow me a share henceforth in all your triumphs?"

"Certainly;—all that I have."

"Then I shall want no others, at least of that sort," murmured she. "But now I must tell you the rest of 'Ye Nunne's Tale.' The bishop asked me, further, whether I had ever published anything. I had, at Uncle Henry's entreaty, a few times, allowed him to have a few of my verses printed in a magazine."

"How were they received?" inquired Bishop Devereux.

"They were praised by some of our acquaintances; because Uncle Henry told who wrote them."

“‘But were they noticed by strangers?—analyzed?—criticised?’

“‘Not at all.’

“‘That which does not excite criticism, is usually below criticism. I fear that literary fame is not for you; and literary flattery will not fill or satisfy your mind. You are inordinately proud, Miss Aspenwall, since you have given me leave to say so; but you are not vain. Spontaneous inspiration, you have not; a masculine nature, you have not; and you cannot whip yourself up daily to long toil by the hope of the even well-earned praise of those, who do not love you, and whom you do not love. To you the world has nothing to offer.’

“‘Nothing!’ I repeated, and stopped. The word seemed to me to come out of my heart, sounding like an echo out of an empty tomb.

“‘Oh, yes,’ said he, ‘I forgot. There is one thing. You can wear the finest dresses, and drive the finest horses in Baltimore.’

“I burst into tears. ‘Daughter, daughter!’ cried he, ‘Do not weep so. The world has, indeed, nothing to offer; but I have something, or I could never have steeled myself to inflict upon you all this cruel,—this necessary, pain. I can, and will, help and rescue you out of this deluge of tears. You shall be saved, poor dove!—warmed and sheltered, and taken into the ark. The world is cruel to you and such as you. Come out of it. Come into the only true church; and you shall find full scope for your fine, full nature, rest for your soul here, and hereafter, bliss unspeakable. Set your ambition on a heavenly diadem, and you shall wear it in the train of Mary; for heaven has a Queen; and her hands are full of honors for her faithful servants,

among whom is neither male nor female, bond nor free. Her canonized maidens, like herself, are called blessed by all after generations; and, unless I deceive myself very greatly, there is still an empty place among them reserved for you. Hear what dignities she has conferred upon her faithful handmaidens, even on earth and before the eyes of men, to confound their overweening arrogance!' and then he broke forth into one of his wonderful improvisations, Herman; until the very walls around us seemed to vanish from my eyes, while in an eternal temple not made with hands, and in a pageant of awful grandeur and beauty, the holy saints, Theresa, Agnes, Catherine, and the rest, seemed to pass before us in procession, wearing crowns upon their heads, and beckoning to me. I wished to follow them. I could not bear to have the vision fade.

"When he ceased, I told him how it had seemed to me. He answered, that I had seen more than he was conscious of describing, but that it was a glimpse of the true reality; and that among such visions I might pass my earthly life,—into such realities I should be born when my earthly life was over,—if I would but walk in the footsteps of those saints here below, and come out of a world which had nothing but emptiness and vanity to offer me.

"'Out of the world!' thought I. Oh,

'Anywhere, anywhere out of the world!'

Many and many a time, I had repeated that line to myself in those days; and his words appeared to me strangely like an answer to it. But I said nothing. He arose to go. 'Stay,' I said.

"'My daughter,' he answered, tenderly, 'it pains me too much to look on, a useless spectator merely of

pain which I am not permitted to relieve,—the pain of one whose suffering is sharper to me than my own. The wounded has endured the probe, but now repels the balm. What can the surgeon do, but depart to the succor of others, who have already felt and learned to welcome the touch of his healing hand? I must not urge you. Wait if you will, and take time to make up your mind; but do not wait too long. Life is short. The judge stands at the door. At any moment, if my time is prolonged to that blessed moment when you are ready to receive peace, I will hasten to you, ease your aching heart with absolution, and welcome you into the sheltering arms of the only true church. In the meantime, if I send you some books, will you read them on your knees, at night and alone?

“I did so. I liked his books. I liked his conversation. But neither his books nor his conversation made me a Catholic. I did not believe, that I should ever be a candidate for canonization. I did not see why I could not be quite as good as a Protestant, as I could, as a Catholic. Besides, being good was not precisely what I cared about so much at first. I wanted to do something great. I know it was very wrong,” said Constance, blushing beautifully.

“Do you, dearest? Not caring to be good would be indefensible, to be sure; but how can you know, that it was wrong in you to wish to do something great?”

“Why—because,—I supposed it must be;—because the bishop told me so afterwards, when I confessed to him that I was not contented with doing some dull work, which the Sisters had given me. You must ask him why it was so, if you do not see.”

“I do not, I must own. It seems to me a doctrine



whose tendency is, forever to tie down great powers to small performances. Do not you remember the parable of the talents? From those to whom much is given, much will be required. This desire to do something great, like all other desires implanted in us by our Maker, requires to be hallowed, and kept within its due bounds. It must not be suffered to degenerate into a desire to do something greater than our neighbours; for then it would lead us to grudge and envy them their successes, and to wish that their works might be the less, that ours might be greater. But as long as we can restrain our desire of greatness to a desire to do our utmost to outdo our past selves, and to glorify our Heavenly Father by the glorious deeds of His children, and, above all, so long as we keep it, with all our other tastes and wishes, down under a paramount desire to do His will, whether in great things or little, it seems to me that it may tend to His service, and to the coming of His kingdom on earth."

"Well, I cannot tell. You must talk with the bishop. I shall be very glad if you do not find it wrong; for I long to see you great,—to have all the rest of the world see you as great as I do, I mean. However; what I wanted was happiness, or at least forgetfulness,—the absorption of all the powers of my vacant mind, that were preying upon me, in some grand career. Don't you remember Michael Scott's demon?—I had one like his. I knew that it would tear me unless I could find work for it; but, if I could, I thought that it might do great things. I believed that it was strong; for else how could it have rent and convulsed me so? I did not wish to confess, nor care about absolution. Remorse was not my trouble; nor was fear. I did not imagine, that eternity had in store for

me any torment worse than the restlessness, aimlessness, and hopelessness, that gnawed away my spirit day by day. A Sister Infirmarian told me once of a state of trance, in which the sufferer may lie incapable of speech or motion for hours or days, and even permit himself to be put into the coffin and the tomb, in breathless life and conscious death. Such a state, it seemed to me, was mine, combined with a mental cramp which made movement a necessity, and immobility an added torture. My destiny had taken the form of a nightmare, and sat upon my breast, whispering, 'Hush!' when I would have cried out, and 'Be still!' when I would have struggled.—Do you think many women lead such lives, Herman? Do you think any one could lead a long life so? Oh, how merciful my God has been to me!—

"I said something like that to the bishop, one day; for, slow as I was in putting myself under his direction, he was very patient with me, and came often to see me, watching over me with a solicitude and sympathy which he could not conceal, though he never forced them upon me. He had often desired me to visit some of the convents; and now he asked Aunt Cora to take me to see the Orphan Asylum of St. Barbara. She was delighted with the suggestion; for she had already taken me to see all the secular sights in the city, and was almost in despair of finding anything new in which she could hope to interest me.

"Beautiful, majestic Sister Corona came to meet us, with a lovely rosy child of eighteen months asleep upon her shoulder, with its dimpled hands clasped round her neck,—such a living picture of Innocence reared by Holiness! She always seemed to me the likeness of some mediæval saint, come by miracle out of the canvas. She welcomed us with a smile that was

like a benediction, and took us to see the other little children at their play. 'Isn't it enough to do your heart good, my dear?' said she, seeing me smile at one of them.

"'Heart!' cried I, turning almost sharply upon her; 'I have no heart; or it is ossified.'

"'Oh, no, dear daughter,' said she, with a sort of cheerful, hopeful tenderness which she always had in her voice; 'Don't think so! It may have been benumbed by some rude shock; but it will be sure to soften and grow warm again, if you do but press a little child to it often enough. If you have none at home, come to me when it aches; and I will lend you my best and sweetest.'

"'I was ashamed to look at Aunt Cora; for I had seldom taken much notice of my good-humored, noisy little cousins, except as an interruption. When we went home, I called them all about me on this sofa and upon my knee, told them stories, and felt better. I had received the first of many good lessons; and week by week, and soon day by day, I went to the Sisters for more, and seldom failed to find what I sought; while my heart, and mind, and imagination, were all fired by what I saw and heard among them. Here at last, I thought, I had found a mode of life, offered to a young and lonely woman, neither listless, aimless, useless, solitary, nor unguided. Among the sisterhood, I found ardor and enthusiasm; nor yet enthusiasm only, but organization, power, obedience, action, and beneficent daring. Their order connected them with far countries and past times. Their individual histories were sometimes full of romantic interest and adventure. They never knew, when they rose in the morning, where they were to sleep at night, nor,

when they lay down at night, where the sun was next to rise upon them. They went where they were sent, at a moment's notice, without a word, sigh, or tear, rejoicing if they were found worthy to suffer in their Master's cause,—even into plague-stricken cities, where to go was death, and there most joyfully, because through them lay the shortest roads into his presence. They rushed upon the field of battle, into the thunder and lightning of cannon, and hail-storm of shot, with hearts as strong and more fearless than those of their brethren, who went there to wound and to slay; for to them, to die was but gain. Here at last was a career open to me which not only men, but angels, might well watch and call glorious! I longed to share it."

"And well you might, my storm-queen!"

"But in order to do so, Herman, you perceive that it was necessary for me to become a Catholic, if I could. One might say, indeed, that I could have learned to lead as useful, religious, and active a life, as a Protestant; and theoretically, I suppose I might; but practically, I don't think I should. I had yet to learn the very alphabet of self-sacrifice, obedience, and humility. I had no habits of regular industry. I was indolent and inexperienced, and absolutely needed, before I attempted to work by myself, to serve an apprenticeship to some person or persons, who had a right to set me to work every day, show me how to work, and see that I did my work. Left to myself, I should but have exerted myself for the poor or sick, in a very ignorant and inefficient manner, for a day or an hour now and then, and then idled a week or a month. I should not have wished to enlist myself in the immediate service of any clergyman; and *clergywomen* I did not know where to find, out of the church of Rome.

It is all very well for Miss Dix, to go about the world alone doing good, at her age; but, at mine, I could not; and, long before I was as old as she, I knew that my bodily and mental powers would have rusted out in idleness and repining. I don't by any means say that they ought, you understand, but that they would. I know it is the theory, that if a nice young lady sits down through all her youth in a nice parlour, nicely dressed, and attends to her domestic duties, ('whether she has any, or enough to occupy her, or not'; as Sister Mary used to say,—'that does not make the slightest difference;')—by and by some other duties will come to her; but, Herman, don't you think there is a little cant about that? Do you think, that young women are quite the exceptions in human nature, that they are taught to consider themselves? Do you *not* think that they, like other persons, need to make some preparation in their youth for what they are to do, and to do well, in their middle age and old age? Am I altogether *strong-minded* and wrong in thinking so?" pleaded she, timidly, looking into his face.

"If you are, I am altogether wrong with you. If all single women bethought themselves betimes of doing this, I believe that we might see fewer she-maniacs in the Insane Asylums, and fewer she-topers, discontented wives, *coquettes*, and gossips, out of them. But the choice of such resources, sanctioned at present by custom and fashion, is dismally small, I grant the bishop, for that epitome of variety, womankind. I scarcely know how a woman of character and ability can do her sex a greater service, than by striking out quietly and modestly some new line of business suited to them, and taking the lead in it. Florence Nightingale has done this; and only see what a *furor* she has



excited. Because her experiment succeeded, it is lauded to the skies. But I suppose there are many able women as little able to be nurses, as to be artists or idlers. Other such experiments will have to be tried, before the proper field of Womanhood can be explored and defined. Some such experiments must fail; but, provided they are tried conscientiously and judiciously, their triers will deserve pity and sympathy, rather than the ridicule and condemnation which they will receive."

"Herman, I wish I knew what advice you, a protestant, could have found to give me, if you had come to my aid instead of the bishop?"

"Can't you guess? It would not have been remarkably disinterested."

"Oh, fie! Seriously, now; what advice would you have given to any other spoiled, idle, discontented *ennuyée* in my place?"

"Do not ask. You would think my prescription a very harsh one, I fear. Remember, my craft teaches me to be unsparing in recommending and urging unpleasant remedies."

"I am not afraid. I think you *could* be firm; I know you could not be unfeeling. Tell me."

"At least, I should not have been so unfeeling as to insult your sense or your suffering by telling you, that your case was not a hard one. I should not have done so, in the first place, because it would have been a falsehood; in the second place, because it would have been a folly. You needed to see, that your situation was, in some respects a peculiarly disadvantageous, unfortunate, and dangerous one, that you might also see that it was necessary for you to make peculiar efforts, in order to extricate yourself from it. It *was* a

misfortune to you, that in your own sect there were no 'clergywomen' to guide and encourage you. The time will come, I hope, when there will be,—I do not say female preachers, though I think, that not St. Paul himself could have found it in his heart to shake his head at Sarah Martin;—but I do hope the time will come when all the branches of Christ's church will include, like that of Cenchrea in old times, accredited female *ministers* of mercy and holiness, capable of training up younger women to follow in their steps. However, you had to do, not with what might have been, but with what was.

"I take then the Bishop's premises: given, a woman, young, intellectual but without any particular scientific or artistic bent, ardent, enthusiastic, melancholy by nature or circumstances, desirous of playing a fine *rôle* in the world, and surfeited with leisure. I begin with saying, Satiety can best be cured by abstinence; the first step is to get rid of your leisure,—your worst enemy, as you yourself acknowledge.—'Precisely,' she would say, 'but how?' I answer, By hard labor. (There is no royal road to greatness, believe me, dear Constance, even for women. I am the last person in the world to undervalue them, I am sure, with such a lady-love and such a sister as fall to the lot of few men; but the nobler the nature of any creature is, the more does it deserve a noble culture, and to be nobly trained to noble uses. And, of all the tricks that my sex plays yours, there are few paltrier than that of wheedling and flattering persons capable of higher and better things, into contented insignificance. We hold up glory to young men as their highest earthly aim; obscurity to young women; and then, finding women in attainments, energy, and ability, generally inferior to men, we coolly attribute

the inferiority of the former in these respects solely to an original difference in nature.) If you would do anything great, you must work your way up to it, and be content to pave your way to great ends with small beginnings. 'But,' she would say, 'at what shall I work? Am I to sit down with my head upon my hand, and wait for my work to come to me?' By no means, I reply; Stand up,—the quicker the better!—prepare yourself for it, and look for it. But all true greatness must have the Greatest of Beings for its starting-point and goal. In a figurative sense, it should, like the Son of God, come from God and go to God. Look to God first, then; ask of Him guidance and steadfastness, for you will have need of it; and then see whether He has not already given you something to do,—laid it close to your hand,—I suppose myself to be speaking to a stranger, you remember,—which you have not seen, merely because you have not looked for it. We cannot expect God's blessing upon any work which we prefer to His; the greatest glory of his children is in glorifying Him; and we cannot glorify Him in disobeying Him. Whatever task he has set you, do that, whatever you leave undone.\* A woman, for instance, who has no very near relations, may still have some relations who need her good offices. At any rate, you owe service to Christ through his poor. If you yet want an introduction to them, ask any sensible and benevolent clergyman or physician of your acquaintance, to give you a list of proper objects of your charity, with some suggestions as to their needs. A person who has time, but little money, may very properly turn some of her time into money, as the apostle suggested, 'working with *her* hands the thing

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\* The Reverend Ephraim Peabody.

that is good, that *she* may have to give to him that needeth.' If you can hear of any discreet and conscientious elderly woman who is engaged, heart and hand, in any laborious work of mercy, you may strengthen her hands; and train your own, by working under and with her; and whether you are cutting out a poor child's frock, or writing a report for a Female Humane Society, or whatever you do, throw yourself into it, and do it in the best and busiest manner. The thing may be a trifle; the habit of mind, in a case like yours, will be everything. Settle with yourself how many and what hours, daily and weekly, you ought to give to these things. Having done so, you may, if need require, exceed your limit; but do not, unless need require, fall below it. As soon as you are known as a charitable worker, charitable work will pour in upon you.

"Then, you may think it a paradox, but I think that the undeniable disadvantage under which young women lie, in not being able to enter upon the labors of mature life from the threshold of mature life, is partly counterbalanced by another of their disadvantages, namely, that they commonly reach that threshold unprepared to enter upon the labors of mature life. They may have the foundation of a good education and its garniture,—a little elementary knowledge and a few so-called *accomplishments*;—but a generous, liberal education, such as brings out the full, harmonious, vigorous developement of the faculties, they have usually not received, and may well spend a few years more in bestowing upon themselves. I say, therefore, next, set apart some hours of every morning for strengthening and tempering your mind by study."

“By what studies, Herman?”

“Now, I am going to be cruel; you know I told you I should.—By just the same studies, which have strengthened and trained other strong and able minds; chiefly Latin, or Greek, (which is far more interesting, and no harder, though the little topsy-turvy letters make it look so,) mathematics, and history. Get your friends,—I should say to our imaginary young friend,—to find some suitable and able teacher to give you a *start* at first; find two or three other agreeable girls, if you can, sufficiently industrious and intelligent not to keep you back to wait for them, for fellow-students; (for you must faithfully follow both of old Burton’s invaluable prescriptions for the cure of your melancholy, ‘Be not solitary,’ as well as ‘Be not idle;’) and go to work like a school-boy. Do not do too much; for you must remember, that you have only that delicate tool, a woman’s mind, to work with, and that it is easily warped or broken; but do not do too little. Fix upon your hours, both for recitation and preparation; and let nothing but some positive duty interfere with your punctuality to them. Let your daily question be, not whether the mood for either study has come; but whether the time for it has come. The clock must be your master for some months at least, until you have learned self-mastery and regularity; after that, you may safely and advantageously exchange your rigid obedience to times and seasons, for a more pliant fidelity to a general plan of life.”

“But, and but, and but!—Rigorous Mentor, you have hardly left me breath enough to protest against your rigor!—But would it not be horribly hard work?”

“Horribly!—so hard, that while you gave your whole



mind to it, as you ought and must, you would have not one single spare thought to inform you whether you were unhappy or not, whether you were lonely or not, or whether you were yourself or somebody else."

"But would it not be horribly dry?"

"Horribly!—so dry, that you would no longer find your leisure, when it came, a bore, but a luxury; but it must not come yet. After your lessons, you must have some good, earnest, hearty exercise, according to your strength; riding, skating, bowling, or rowing, for instance, if you could obtain suitable companions, would be much more likely to improve your spirits and health than mere *constitutionals*. After that, I must let you rest. I think I see you reclining very prettily in the easy-chair, which you have earned a right to, with a fine bloom, and two bright eyes (unless they share in your general weariness; if they do, you must only play on the piano or listen to some one else, knit, or chat,) fixed upon a piece of needle-work, or an interesting biography of some Christian hero or heroine, who served God mightily, in spite of mighty difficulties, or some work of elevating and inspiring fiction;—I will not deny you even that. You will enjoy it; but you will not enjoy it long. You are conscious of feeling a little drowsy; and then somebody says, 'Constance, my love,' or 'Katy,' or 'Miss,' 'sha'n't you burn your hair?' With surprise, you find that your eyes are shut. You unclosethem just long enough to say your prayers and make your preparations for the night, and drop asleep again the moment your cheek touches your pillow. Healthily refreshed after healthy fatigue, you rise early the next morning, to find your learned labors probably less dry; and after a while, it may be, you will cease to find them dry at

all. They will become transfigured before you. In your classical studies you will see yourself going to the same school, as it were, and sitting on the same benches, with the greatest philosophers and statesmen of ancient and modern times; and the mathematics will unroll for your inspection the architectural plans of the Creator,—the laws which are the skeleton of the universe.—At any rate, you have got rid of your leisure. You have plenty of work, wholesome if not attractive, in social duty, study, and exercise, each kind capable of indefinite extension, according to your need. Under the first head, leave yourself time enough for the generous consideration and promotion of the happiness of those immediately about you, that self-discipline may not degenerate into mere self-reference, and that your heart may not share in the hardening process which is going on in your intellect; for the sympathies, even of those naturally the most fastidious and exclusive, are capable of indefinite expansion; and on the other hand I have felt,—noticed, I mean,—that the tendency of a wounded soul is sometimes to close over again with a rough and callous scar. Having laid out your plan, to the best of your judgment, giving its due place to each of these things, try it for three months at least, without once asking yourself whether it is doing you good or not, and, if possible, without making a single alteration in it.”

“But, my dear Herman, would it not be very difficult to persevere in so severe a system of self-culture, without any stimulus or object?”

“Very difficult, my dearest love; under the present *régime*, a woman needs to have twice the energy and capacity of an ordinary man, in order to attain as generous an education even as many an ordinary man;

but no one can lead a great life without great efforts. The impetus, which it is the privilege of us young men to receive at the outset of our career, from our elders, valuable as it is, is apt to spend itself soon and die out, unless we can keep it up, in great measure by ourselves. Besides, though you may have no human stimulus, you ought to encourage and enliven yourself continually with the hope of your heavenly Father's approbation, and the hope also, that if you are faithful over a few things, He will make you ruler over many things. Do not parents always take pleasure in seeing their children do well? Do not dutiful children love to give them that pleasure? Moreover, we suppose my arduous experiment to be tried by a girl capable of greatness,—a girl of a great soul. We will suppose, then, that she has tried it, and tried it with little change of outward circumstance even for nine or ten years. She has spent nine or ten years, then, in the diligent and judicious exercise of all her powers,—in the faithful and loving discharge of all her duties to God and her neighbour. The ardent, but inexperienced, undeveloped, and unoccupied girl of twenty, is now a woman of thirty. She has the habit of study, the habit of attention, the habit of reflection, the habit of action. Her mind is well furnished, scholarly, clear, and quick; and her health, probably good. Throw such a person anywhere, and she will come down on her feet.

“Having been forced, under God, to lay out her path in life for herself, and having done so thoughtfully and considerately, her every step has been an exercise of judgment. A good and experienced judgment is now, therefore, added to her original ardor and enthusiasm; and good judgment, ardor, and enthu-

siasm, make up almost the perfection of a *working* character. She is the person of whom all who know her say the first, when any good work is to be done, 'She would be the very person to do it, if she has not too much upon her hands already.' She will be,—she is,—she has been,—great, in self-mastery, capacity, industry, and fidelity to God. Whether men and women do or will call her so, she has ceased to care, if she ever cared. Having toiled so long, with the object of making herself not an admired scholar or mathematician, but an accomplished and able handmaid of the Lord, she has learned to love less the praise of men than the praise of God. She has ceased to estimate greatness by any human standard; and perhaps she finds the works, which have already accumulated upon her, extensive enough, even for her enlarged and practised powers; but, if she believes that she could secure greater usefulness in a wider sphere, her engaging kindness and proved prudence have probably earned for her the confidence and coöperation of many friends; and her riper age itself has now become a sort of *chaperone* for her. She will then, perhaps, become a mother to some orphan children, like Miss Bremer's Evelina,—or devote herself to the wounded, like Miss Nightingale,—to the sick, like Miss \*\*\*\*\*, M. D.—to the insane, like Miss Dix,—or to the wicked, like Mrs. Fry,—or strike out, like them, some new path for herself, suited to her individual self. Perhaps she will become such a mistress, as she herself could not find on her entrance into life, to other unoccupied and unsatisfied girls. What she will do, I cannot tell; nor will she ask me. By this time she knows herself; and, in whatever course she takes, she probably has at least thirty years of vigorous activity before her, all the

more efficient for the ten waiting and working years of preparation which have preceded.

"Looking back over a past crowded with honorable achievement and deeds of love and wisdom, three hundred and sixty-five in a year at the very lowest computation, she is hardly very wretched. I do not say that she is leading so happy a life as I wish her, or so happy a life as I hope such women will be able to lead a century or two hence, when there are more of them to keep each other in countenance, and society has become accustomed to them, and found out how many things they are good for; but is it not a beautiful and blessed life, compared with that which she *was* leading and likely to lead?"

"Yes, indeed!"

"Whether following out my suggestions would lead to such a life, I can only conjecture. They are the suggestions of only a young and inexperienced man. But I should like to have the experiment tried."

"By me, Herman?"

"Yes, my dearest love,—if you find yourself 'idle, discontented, and *ennuyée*.'—Seriously, no. Physicians don't try experiments on the members of their own families,—unless they are tired of them."

"You have not tried it upon Clara, then?"

Herman laughed heartily. "I wish you would ask Edward that question, when I am by to see. He always regarded her as his peculiar property, don't you recollect? Besides, I do not think Clara, in any respect, a fit subject. She was never *ennuyée* in her life. It never in her life, I imagine, occurred to her that she could do anything great; she is contented with being beautiful and good. Perhaps she could do more good if she were more enterprising; but no, I



will not say, or even think, anything so ungracious and ungrateful. I doubt, whether she has in her the material for a Miss Dix or Mrs. Fry. She is never idle now; and I do not believe, that hard labor of any kind was what God planned for her; she has none of the restless eagerness, which commonly accompanies a great capacity for it. Domestic life is her paradise; and she is an angel in it. She does her good and appropriate service in this feverish, dark, unquiet world, while she shines through and over it with her aspect of sweet, calm, heavenly peace. Different people are made, and wanted here, for different uses. Providence assorts us all. I like you each best as you are. There is room for, and need of, both the Clara and the Constance. More's the pity, that there is only one of each."

"Well; as I was going to tell you, the Sisters' lives made a convert of my heart; and then I said to the bishop, 'Make me like them, and I can ask no better.' He taught me,—he tried to teach me,—to be gentle towards others, severe towards myself, to look upon my character not as that of some mere irresponsible heroine of fiction, but as God should look upon it at the last day, to repent of my pride instead of priding myself upon it, to seek out, acknowledge, and cure my faults, instead of excusing them, to struggle with my indolence, and to mortify my selfishness. I took a private vow;—by the regulations of the order, years must pass before one can formally and fully be admitted to it.—I joined the Sisters, and, by special favor, was allowed to assume their habit. I did as they did, and as they bade me; and among them I have toiled a year."

"A happy year, my dearest?"

"Herman, do not ask! But I will tell! A year

of sackcloth and ashes it has been to me ; because I was not worthy. I went to them, hoping to get out of the world of which I was so weary ; but, because I was so worldly, the world followed and went in with me, even there. My life was far more monotonous, and less exciting, than I had expected ; partly because I had, I suppose, expected too much, and partly because I took too little interest in duty for its own sake. All the pampered tastes, which had lost their appetite in me from over-feeding, regained it from fasting, and hungered and thirsted for poetry, songs, drawing, conversation, and all that gives beauty and grace to polite life. Toil, hardship, and contact with *real* life, sobered my mind and moderated my demands ; and I often wondered, how I could ever have been in such a hurry to leave Aunt Cora's. While the Sisters said, that I was learning efficiency, energy, and skill in tending the sick,—(they employed me chiefly in that ; because they said their sicker patients liked my noiseless movements and quiet ways, but that I was too silent and grave to be with children. Do you find me silent and grave, Herman ?)—all that time, I was painfully and sadly learning deeper and sadder lessons, which they knew not of,—lessons that humbled me to the dust. In contrast with their single-hearted, eager self-devotion, my own worldliness,—my own selfishness—stared me in the face day by day. I could bear the days, however, better ; for then we were busy, and I had less time to think ; but when night came, and we sat down to rest, with nothing more interesting—to me—than the prescribed life of some poor saint to read, and they read and heard it, and were contented and thankful, then most of all I saw and felt that I was utterly unlike them,—that I was a hypocrite among them, and had no right to be there,—that I had

snatched the crown, of which I was not worthy, before it was held out to me, and only because it shone. It scorched me, therefore, and I could not bear it,—I did not know how I could bear it long and live,—nor yet how I could ever bear to acknowledge my error, self-conceit, and presumption.”

“You *have* learned humility, Constance! I will not try to flatter you out of it. I fear, we are all more given to think of our own glory than the glory of God. But did it not occur to you, that a part of your uneasiness might come from the fact, that He had ordained you to serve Him in part as an intellectual woman; and that you were unnecessarily starving your intellect?”

“To tell the whole truth, though I put it on no grounds higher than those of my longing, and suffering, for a little literary food more tempting to me, I did complain of that to the confessor, I had where I then was, in hopes he would grant me a dispensation. I got only a penance from him, and an assurance that it was a ‘temptation of the enemy, my daughter,’” said Constance, casting down her eyes demurely, as she lapsed in spite of her into a little sly mimicry; “but he was a foreigner,—from—from Ireland, and not a highly educated person himself.—I dare say the bishop would have been more lenient.”—

“And *you* thought it your duty, Constance,” said Herman, with a strong inward emphasis upon the “you,” “to obey such a person as that?”

“Certainly. I was bound to do it. Don’t you know what is said in the ‘*Combat Spirituel*’?—oh, I forgot; you have not read it yet,—‘It is better to obey the lowest [*le dernier*] of men for the love of God, than to command kings and princes.’”

Herman shuddered within himself, as he thought of

the uses that might be, and as he feared had been, made of such maxims; but he said only, "You did not want poetry to read, while you were tending the sick. If I were sick, you could be contented without reading?"

"Yes,—quite as contented as I could with it. I wish you may be partly right, and that I may not have been so wholly wrong; but" Constance went on, "in short, I was continually haunted and harassed more and more, in the midst of all my fatigues, hardships, and privations, by the fear that I had mistaken my vocation, and seized on one too holy for me, through a vain love of excitement and *éclat*, and a wilful longing for death; though how wrong *that* was I did not fully see, until I saw it with your eyes. Do not you remember that day in the farm-house in Kansas, when Sister Mary was talking with you and I sat by, and she mentioned that the Sisters of St. Luke wished to have a convent in a very unhealthy place in Florida, and were forbidden, because Bishop Devereux said, that it would be wantonly throwing away their lives? You had lately been hanging, as we thought, on the brink of the grave, and so calmly; but you said then that No one could be prepared to die, who was not prepared to live willingly, so long as it was the will of God. Up to that time, death had been more and more my hope, and my only hope; for pride and shame threatened forever to bar my escape from what seemed to me an ever more and more insupportable captivity. But then a great revulsion of feeling came over me. The truth and courage, which breathed out from you, gave me strength to be brave and true to myself; and I determined to humble myself, own my folly, face ridicule, and bow my spirit to go back to the home from which I had broken



away, open still to me, as I knew, with a hearty welcome,—make myself as useful as I could to Aunt Cora, and eke out my support, if she would allow me, with my needle or by copying or translating, for a time,—to devote my spare hours to the poor and sick in Baltimore, no longer as I hoped inefficiently after the skillful training I had had,—to read, rest, and think, and endeavour, by time, penance, and prayer, to wean myself gradually from the world, and fit myself for the calling I had so rashly taken upon myself to follow,—and then or never to return to it. For, Herman, you must not think,—indeed you must not!”—exclaimed Constance, with a gush of proud blood into her cheeks, “that I had the least idea of putting myself in your way, or throwing myself upon your compassion. Sister Mary had told me, that she understood you were soon to be married; else I might not have had moral courage enough to facesome misconstructions, to which my return would have exposed me.”

“What did the woman mean?—How dared she!”—cried our excitable young friend, starting to his feet and looking puritanically ready to annihilate the Scarlet Woman, with all her dependants but one.

“What did she mean?” repeated Constance, laughing, as she laid her hand upon his arm and

“Smoothed the raven down of *broadcloth*, till he smiled;”

“To make me as cold and stiff and unkind to you as possible, and keep me from giving you a single chance to speak to me or correspond with me; as if we had not been honorable people, and upon honor; but to set it all right with me afterwards, as she did yesterday, at the last moment, just before she set me down safely here; though then it came very near being all wrong for you; for, until she repeated to me some



piteous, despairing, nonsense that you once talked to her, sir, I had a great mind to run off again, and hide, no matter where; and, after all, I did not know whether to believe her or not.—‘How did she dare?’ She did not know how your eyes could flash, I suppose; nor did I till this moment. She does equivocate a little now and then;—it is her only fault,—but always she says, ‘with a good intention;’—and she keeps a little paper book, in which she sets every instance down, so as to be sure not to forget one at confession. I fear she would not find that the ‘soothing sacrament’ that she calls it, if you were her director; and you are right. Of all things, I detest and despise falsehood!”

“And of all things, I love truth,” said Herman, pressing her hand,—“truth and Constance, one and inseparable!”—And so they were. Herman ought not to have made puns, especially bad ones; but this one was founded on fact, and on a good fact.

But what had become of his supernal and unapproachable heroine,—his sovereign queen,—his seventh heavenly saint? She was gone; and he did not miss her. His tragic muse had put her buskins off, because the place whereon she stood was holy ground; but she stood for that only the nearer to his heart. It is not every child, who chooses his book for the sake of its pretty covers, that is so well pleased when he comes to read it, or with so good reason. Herman had found in his,—the fair pages of his Constance’s heart,—not quite what he had expected, it was true, but in nursery parlance a “pleasant surprise,”—a surprise so pleasant, that it never occurred to him to go back to ask what his expectation had been, or to compare it with the reality. He had been but a boy when he fell in love, and a somewhat unformed, dreamy

boy, who sought to find without him the stimulus, guidance, and steadfastness, which he had not yet proved within. He was a man now, and a strong and resolute man, though tender-hearted still, and found it as sweet to lead his lady-love, as she did to be led by him. He had changed so much, that if she had not been much changed, too, she might not,—she could not,—have suited him so well. If not altogether a guide for him, she was eager to be guided, and would, he foresaw, soon permit him to be her guide in all respects where she needed one. He hoped so, at least; and if he was not quite sure, his doubt was as a little grain of pepper, which gave piquancy to his hope. If capable of being deceived, it was through thoughtlessness and artlessness, not dulness; and she herself was incapable of deceit. If not faultless, she was most candid and open in owning her faults, most nobly eager to repair them, and most winning in seeking forgiveness. Happy is the man or woman, who can pour out all his or her failings and feelings before the soul that loves him or her the best, and be only the dearer for the revelation!

It is not to be imagined, however, that Herman analyzed and anatomized Constance after this cool fashion himself, for our satisfaction; far from it. It is only I, who do it for the satisfaction of my less enthusiastic readers. Without deigning to pry into the premises, he jumped at once to the conclusion, that she was precisely what he wanted to make him the happiest of men; and as this was precisely the same conclusion to which he had jumped about four years before, any little alteration in the premises over which he jumped was quite disregarded.

#### NOTE TO VOLUME I.

NOTE A.—It is scarcely necessary, I trust, to remind my readers here or elsewhere, that what I undertake to lay before them is not a history, but a story.

If, however, they will judge for themselves whether or not the episode of Kansas, *se non è vero, è ben trovato*, I am happy to refer them to the "Reports of the Majority and Minority of the Congressional Committee of Investigation on the subject of Kansas," in which they may find testimony both for and against me.





















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